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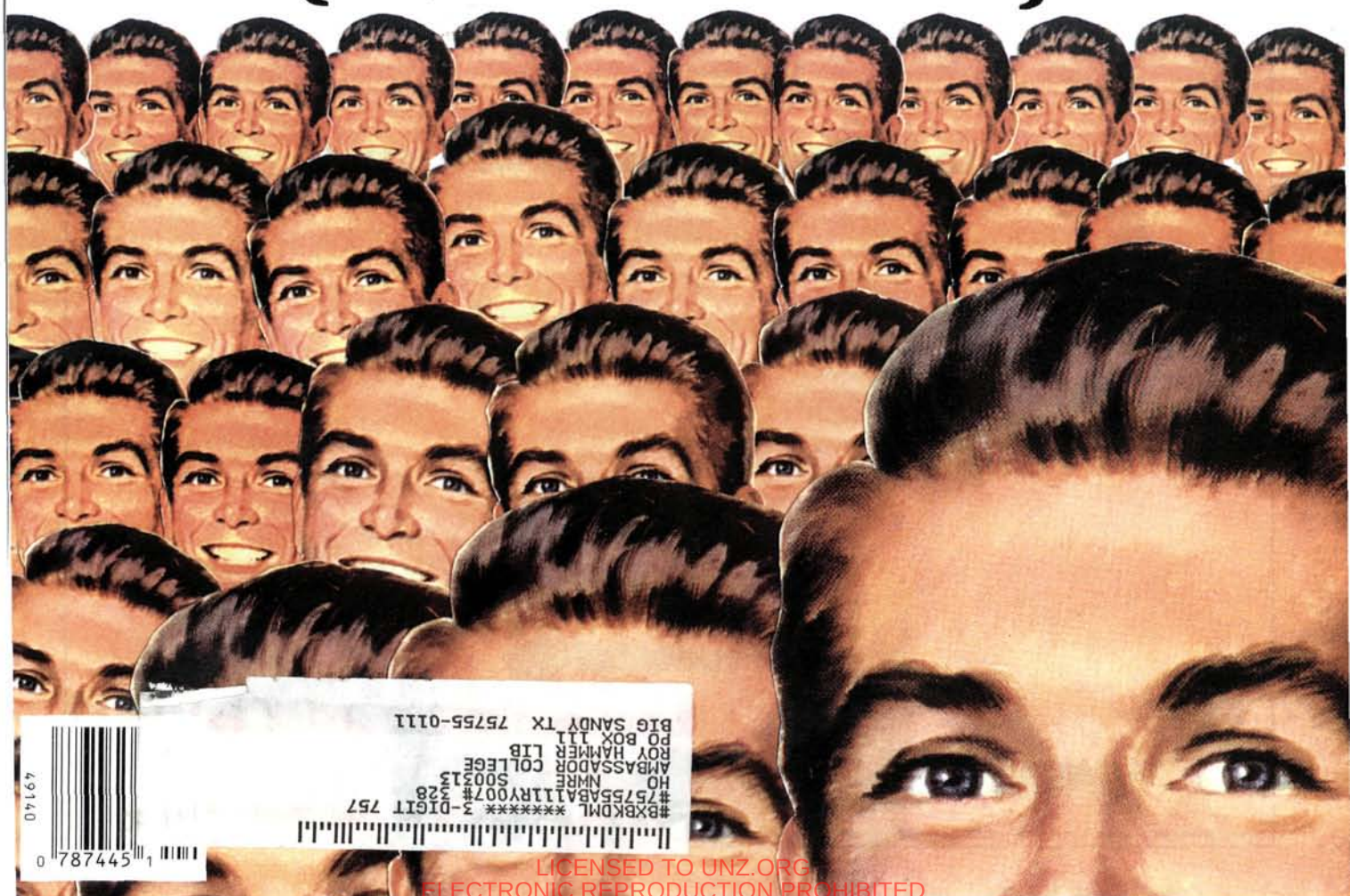
THE NEW REPUBLIC

Roger Rosenblatt: Nixon and the Jews • Camille Paglia: Jackie and the horses

THE STONEWALL MYTH

Can the gay rights movement get beyond the politics of nostalgia?

{ BY BRUCE BAWER }



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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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JUNE 13, 1994

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CORRESPONDENCE

Still the one

To the editors:

Jonathan Rauch's account of Richard Nixon's legacy ("What Nixon Wrought," May 16) omits one of Nixon's most catastrophic mistakes: the drug war.

As he was losing in Vietnam, Nixon pronounced drugs "public enemy No. 1" and committed the country to an "all-out global war on the drug menace." In the years since, we have spent more than $200 billion in taxes on the drug war and have created a $50 billion annual black market managed by merciless thugs. We have doubled both our crime rates and our supply of privately held guns. Many of our schools are now controlled by drug dealing gangsters who terrorize and assassinate their fellow students and teachers. More Americans are killed by drug dealers than by illicit drugs. Our inner cities have become caldrons of criminality, unfit for habitation. Our police have become corrupted as perhaps never before.

Until Nixon declared war, illicit drug use and distribution were treated mostly as vices, like prostitution and gambling. Nixon equated them with treason and thus created an inner-city hell that still worsens two decades later.

STEVEN B. DUKE
New Haven, Connecticut

To the editors:

Any responsible historian would give this country's "worst president of the century" prize to Herbert Hoover. Hoover's balanced budget tax increases and Smoot-Hawley protectionism turned an ordinary recession into the Great Depression. It took a new president to save a paralyzed America from the twin specters of fascism and communism.

Many of the ills Jonathan Rauch blames on Richard Nixon were actually started by Lyndon Johnson, the twentieth century's second-worst president. Public cynicism? Under whose administration did we first hear the phrase "credibility gap"? Inflation? Who delayed by a crucial year asking for tax increases to finance the Vietnam War ("guns and butter")? The Vietnam War? Under each year of LBJ's administration, the death toll grew, while under each year of Nixon's it fell. Admittedly, Nixon's gradual withdrawal cost more casualties than a rapid withdrawal, even while failing to preserve a non-Communist South Vietnam. Nevertheless, in conjunction with his China opening, Nixon's firmness in Vietnam provided a few crucial years for the capitalist "Asian miracle" to take root in neighboring countries. This same Asian miracle, by demonstrating a viable road to development, brought about our victory in the cold war twenty years later.

HUGO S. CUNNINGHAM
Boston, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Jonathan Rauch lets Nixon off too easily when he states that the Nixon people should not be "blamed for the mistake" of committing the government to racial entitlements that have turned out to be "factories of resentment." In fact, on the basis of our research, we are convinced that Nixon encouraged such race-based policies explicitly because of their polarizing potential. It was not a mistake from his point of view but a way to cynically manipulate race in order to divide people. Specifically, he sought to destroy the old liberal Democratic constituency by splitting labor from African Americans and other liberals in order to create a new Republican majority.

It was a mistake all right—one for which our country has been paying dearly in racial animosity and anger. But Nixon's genius and evil was that he consciously chose to act in this way to promote his own personal career.

JOAN D. MANDLE
Director of Women's Studies
JAY R. MANDLE
W. Bradford Wiley Professor of Economics
Colgate University
Hamilton, New York

To the editors:

With reference to your Nixon issue, fuck you all (but don't cancel my subscription).

DONALD R. LORELLI
Wilton, Connecticut

To the editors:

I picked up your cover, fell to the floor and started to pray. Please, please, tell me I'm dreaming. Was that—or was that not—Richard Nixon, rising from the dead, giving us not one but *two* fingers for the last time?

ROBERT KRAMER
Washington D.C.

Bollicks

To the editors:

Clint Bolick suggests that my book, *The Tyranny of the Majority*, presents a scrubbed-clean version of my views, expunging my truly radical agenda (Cor-

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respondence, May 16). In fact, it presents the fullest possible statements of my views. It makes an honest attempt to show the evolution of my thinking, including an essay written while I was litigator for the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, before I joined the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Bolick's charge that I "virtually erased" my proposal for legislatures to consider cumulative voting is wrong. On page 108 I argue that "legislative cumulative voting would discourage voting up or down on individual proposals." Entire sections of chapter four concern legislative power sharing. As for Bolick's claim that I erased my equal results "touchstone," his argument is with federal law, not my original thinking, for he refers to a lone sentence explaining the meaning of the term "anti-discrimination" in then-current federal administrative policy. I had stated that the Bush administration "had not yet committed itself to enforce effectively existing anti-discrimination policies." In a footnote to that sentence I had written, "The term 'anti-discrimination' refers to more than the basic process of decision-making. It incorporates a result-oriented inquiry, in which roughly equal outcomes, not merely an apparently fair process, are the goal."

If the question is whether I approve of the then-existing legal norm that particular outcomes often matter as evidence of discrimination, the answer is yes. But if the question is whether enforced, equal outcomes are my personal "touchstone," the answer is no. I have focused on process, not results. The crux of my work has been to seek procedural reforms, such as cumulative voting, that will legitimate the process to achieve fairer results. I do not advocate externally enforced results, and careful readers will note that the indexer of my book found only two types of reference to quotas; "concerns about" and "repudiation of."

There is nothing wrong with opposing quotas or racial spoils systems, but using sound bites to do so is unfair. I am happy to respond, on the merits, when Bolick or anyone else offers constructive criticism of my actual views. Such an honest exchange, however, is difficult when public discourse proceeds instead as "drive-by debate."

LANI GUINIER
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Undersexed

To the editors:

I agree with Jeffrey Rosen that gender does sometimes affect jury deliberations ("Oversexed," May 16). I also agree that a woman's right to vote implies her right to vote on juries. However, I don't see how the two assertions connect to form an argument against gender-based peremptory strikes, especially, as in *J.E.B.*, strikes against male jurors.

Since studies have shown that gender sometimes matters in jury deliberations and that both defense attorneys and prosecutors use peremptory challenges to achieve favorably biased juries as well as to prevent unfavorably biased ones, a criminal defendant's Sixth Amendment guarantee of an impartial jury (and logically any defendant's or plaintiff's right to a fair trial) forms a better agreement not only against Alabama's exclusion of male jurors but also against all peremptory challenges.

GAYLE TURNER
Austin, Texas

Muddy Waters

To the editors:

Your May 9 "Notebook" item on Whitewater repeats two errors made by James Risen in the April 15 *Los Angeles Times.*

First, you claim there is a discrepancy between the amount the Clintons have said they lost on Whitewater—more than $46,000—and the payments that show up in the corporate tax records. You state, "There are two possible explanations: either the Whitewater documents are in error or the Clintons dissembled the amount of their losses on their tax returns." Actually, there is another explanation: the Clintons made payments on loans for which they were *personally* liable and, with rare exception, did not make payments through the corporation. Thus, there is no reason to expect that the Clintons' payments would be reflected on the corporate tax returns.

Second, you note that "the corporate returns indicate that Whitewater was bringing in as much as $60,000 annually from land sales during years in which the Lyons report said no sales were made." Once again, you say "there are two possible explanations: either the Clinton campaign and Mr. Lyons's team of accountants simply misread the returns, or they deliberately dissembled about their contents." Once again, there is another (correct) explanation: when a parcel of land is sold through an installment contract, the entire gain is realized for *accounting* purposes in the year of the sale, while it is realized for *tax* purposes only in the year in which the installment payments are made. Thus, it is not in the least surprising that a tax return could show taxable income in a year when no sales were made, since those receipts would represent installments from sales in earlier years.

JOHN PODESTA
Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary
Washington, D.C.

Tragic

To the editors:

Regarding Jennifer Allen's article on the radio show hosted by Jerry Brown ("Radio Daze," May 2): The very P.C. opening music selected by Barzaghi for Brown's show is not "When Time Was Right in America" but "One Time One Night," the first song on the seminal second album by Los Lobos, "By the Light of the Moon." Contrary to Barzaghi's opinion, the song is not a romantic reminiscence of a simpler, happier time in the U.S. of A. It is, instead, a collage of tragic characters (victims of drive-by shootings, child abduction, drunken drivers and spouse abuse) for whom the American dream is just that—a dream, never to be obtained.

Although the actual imagery fits nicely with Brown's messages, his staff's misinterpretation of the song is a fitting metaphor for the whole "We Are the People" organization: generally heading in the right direction, but in a backward fashion. As Jerry Brown shows, one man's yoga position is another man's contortion.

JON R. DAVIDS, M.D.
Greenville, South Carolina

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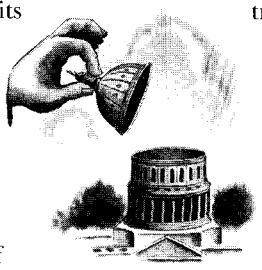
FROM WASHINGTON

Bad choice

Abortion rights have triumphed. Against all odds (and, I'm afraid, against all logic), the basic holding of *Roe* v. *Wade* is secure in the Supreme Court. It's easy to forget how unlikely this seemed just a few years ago—before a series of new Republican-appointed justices betrayed those who had appointed them, and then a Democrat unexpectedly captured the White House.

A clear majority of Americans favors a woman's right to choose. Opportunistic politicians who used to pander to the right-to-life movement now swear their fealty to choice. Republican leaders are desperate to reposition their party as moderate or agnostic on the issue. Congress has passed, and the president has signed, a bill cracking down on disruptions at abortion clinics. The ban on medical research involving fetal tissues has been lifted. So has the effective blockade against RU-486, the French abortion pill.

But the crowning triumph—a national freedom of choice law—has been sidelined. Why? Because the abortion rights movement has decided to concentrate on making sure that abortion is among the guaranteed benefits in health care reform. This is a pity, for two reasons. First, a freedom of choice law would guarantee abortion rights the correct way, democratically, rather than by constitutional origami. Second, guaranteed financing of abortion as part of health care reform is a much more dubious proposition.



Right-to-lifers ask a good question: Why should they be forced to help pay, through their taxes, for a procedure they find morally repellent? Government-financed abortions for poor women probably would save taxpayers' money overall, by reducing the long-term welfare burden. But that doesn't answer those whose concern is the principle, not the cash.

In fact, mandating abortion coverage would forcibly implicate abortion opponents in two ways: through whatever government subsidies end up being part of the system, and through their private insurance premiums, which—by law—would have to pay for abortions. To be sure, two-thirds of all private health insurance now covers abortion. Millions of abortion opponents are already subsidizing the procedure either without realizing it or without any special trauma. This is another example (like rationing) of how health care reform will force people to confront moral dilemmas that the old system left comfortingly muddled. Under current rules, at least, anyone who really thinks that abortion is murder can opt out if she wants to. If abortion becomes a universal, guaranteed benefit, that will be impossible.

In a democracy, the majority rules. Everyone doesn't like something-or-other the government does, but the government obviously couldn't function if all taxpayers could pick and choose what government functions they cared to pay for. There are those who object to military spending and argue with the same passion as the right-to-lifers that forcing them to pay for bombers leaves blood on their hands. Should they be allowed to opt out, too?

The trouble with this tempting argument is that the national defense is what economists call a "public good": it is a benefit that cannot be supplied to one without being supplied to all. How much of it we buy has got to be a collective decision, made by majority. That's not true of abortions.

Furthermore, abortion is a uniquely divisive and emotional issue in American democracy. A substantial minority believes deeply that it is morally wrong. By comparison, the number of those who have deep moral objections to bombers per se (as opposed to those who merely believe that the current level of military spending is unnecessary) is quite small. Simple political comity suggests that this passionate minority should not have its nose rubbed in the dirt. Respect for the sensitivities of a minority, even this minority, ought to come easily to liberals and civil libertarians.

There are less highfalutin considerations as well. Health care reform is the fight of the Clinton presidency. Why force him to use up chips, alienate millions of potential supporters and end with weak reform or no reform at all,

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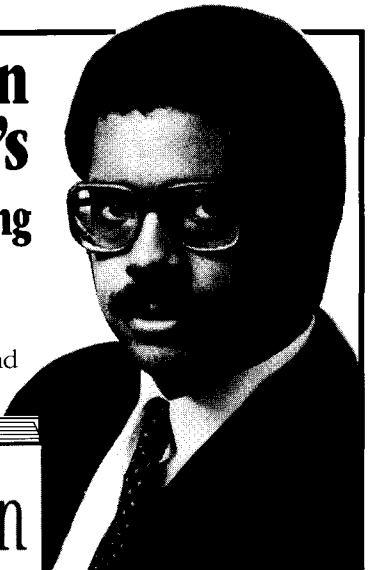
Did President Clinton read Stephen Carter's latest book before nominating Judge Breyer?



Is that why he picked a "safe" choice? And what does this tell us about the nature of the nominating process? Read ***The Confirmation Mess*** to find out.

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—COMMENTARY

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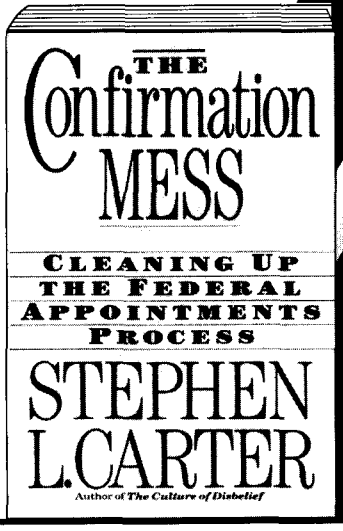

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JUNE 13, 1994

ALL ABOARD

Thomas Downs, Amtrak's president, might have shown better timing. His request for a bigger 1995 subsidy than President Clinton is offering—already the best offer Amtrak has had in recent memory—came only four months after an Alabama train wreck killed forty-seven people and weeks before the recent collision that killed one and injured many more.

Then again, these things happen. And they don't happen often. In Amtrak's twenty-three-year history, 101 people have died in crashes—a tally that airlines have been known to exceed in a single headline. An American is eighteen times more likely to die during a mile of car travel than during a mile on the rails.

Nor is safety Amtrak's only strength. An airplane requires twice as much energy as a train to move you from town to town. And unless your auto has several passengers, and the roads are uncongested, taking a train uses much less fuel. The environmental virtues of rail are commensurate to the fuel savings—sometimes greater, depending on the type of train and the pollutant in question.

Does this mean Amtrak deserves a subsidy? In an economist's dream world, maybe not. Rather, all polluters would be taxed to reflect the social costs, with the worst polluters taxed the most. But in the real world, car travel is subsidized massively (road upkeep, etc.) and air travel less massively. If subsidizing transportation is to remain federal policy, Amtrak deserves a larger subsidy per passenger mile on environmental grounds.

Another reason we should want a healthy Amtrak is that trains are among the increasingly rare places where Americans of different ethnic and socio-economic sorts regularly mingle—chatting in the snack bar line, commiserating over broken air-conditioning and so on. This sort of community may be meager, but it's more than you'll find in planes (heavily white and white-collar and not conducive to walking around) or on Greyhound buses (heavily blue-collar and not conducive to walking around) or in New Jersey Turnpike rest stops (conducive to walking back to your car before eating your Dunkin' Donuts).

All told, Clinton is to be commended for seeking a 15 percent hike in Amtrak's budget, to $788 million, after a dozen years of malign neglect under Ronald Reagan and George Bush. And Amtrak should be given some of the extra $137 million it says it needs to arrest the visible decline in its service and equipment. And support should hold firm in the future.

But there is one caveat about the *composition* of future Amtrak budgets. During the election campaign Clinton got excited about, among other techno-wonders, a high-speed rail system. Beyond a certain point, however, the faster the train, the weaker the case for subsidy. That trains eat more fuel and spew more filth when moving fast is part of the problem, but hardly all of it.

Already, one drawback of the Amtrak approach to social integration is that some of its subsidy is "wasted" on affluent riders (largely business users) who would gladly have paid the "true" ticket price if the government hadn't chipped in, say, $20. For many lower-income riders, the subsidy is pivotal and thus more efficient. There is no way to solve this problem without calibrating the subsidy by income, giving special discounts to poorer people (an idea we like, assuming it's doable); waste is a price often paid even for justified subsidies. Still, if a *huge* chunk of the Amtrak subsidy goes to the affluent, and if a large part of that chunk is "wasted," the whole exercise acquires a certain absurdity: trains loaded with corporate titans getting paid to mingle with each other, when many of them would have done so anyway.

That faster and more expensive trains attract more affluent riders is evident when you compare a Metroliner with a regular Washington-New York run. The contrast in social diversity isn't dramatic, but it's marked. Add another 50 mph and $25 per ticket to the Metroliner and the contrast could get stark. According to Northeastern University's Steve Morrison, 65 percent of Amtrak's northeast corridor subsidy already goes to business users, in no small part because of the Metroliner.

Amtrak plans to buy some European trains that can do 150 mph on existing tracks, to make the Boston-New York run more competitive with air travel. We suspect these trains will defeat much of the great social purpose we're extolling, but we're willing to wait and see. In any event, the dreams stirred by Clinton's campaign rhetoric—300 mph trains that require expensive new tracks—are best left unrealized. An Amtrak train is a wonderful thing so long as it diverts people eclectically—some from planes, some from cars, some from buses. When it becomes merely a low-flying airplane, full of white men in suits, it loses much of its charm. •

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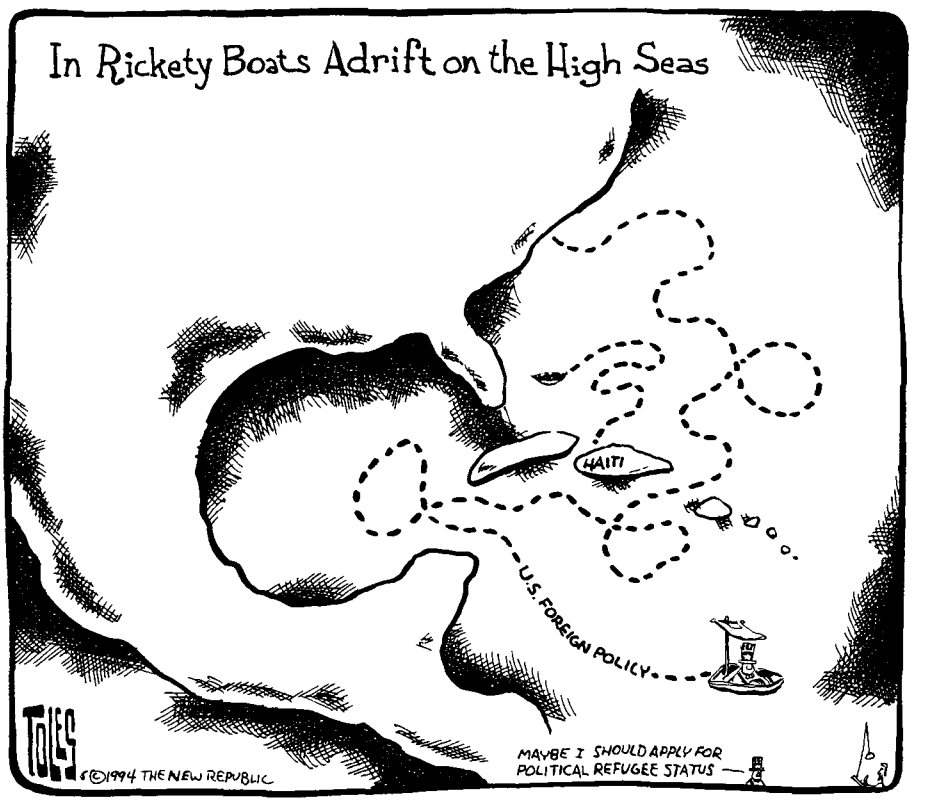
NOTEBOOK

THE HAPPIEST JIHAD: The "East" is famous for being "inscrutable," but its inscrutability on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" on May 18 was ridiculous. John Esposito, a Georgetown University scholar on Islam, who heads a program that goes by the name of the Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding, was NPR's guest expert. The subject was Yasir Arafat's call, in a South African mosque, for a jihad, or holy war, with Jerusalem as its final goal. Arafat had dismissed the recently signed pact with Israel as a cease-fire akin to a temporary peace that the Prophet Muhammad once concluded with his enemies in Mecca. Arafat, in short, was caught speaking his mind, and tapes of the speech were broadcast over Israeli radio. But Esposito, a promoter of radical Islamic causes of every kind, is not a man easily deterred. No, he said, Arafat did not have armed struggle in mind. Jihad is a "generic term," said the Georgetown scholar. It can mean "the struggle to be good, to be virtuous, to accomplish." Warming up to his task, Esposito said that a jihad can be practically anything: "People will talk about a jihad to clean up the town, a jihad for a literacy campaign, a jihad against AIDS." (And Hillary Rodham Clinton, you might say, is promoting a jihad against smoking.) Pardon the Israelis left cold by such an explication. They are finding it difficult not to conclude that they have just reached an accord with a petty adventurer shorn of any sense of historic responsibility, that they have set up in Jericho an unsure man who dabbles in the most virulent kind of incitement. But happy is the man with such reliable apologists.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MAYBE I SHOULD APPLY FOR POLITICAL REFUGEE STATUS

COMING SOON, THE IDI AMIN FALL COLLECTION: We thought that the disheveled, drug-crazed thugs who have terrorized Somalia and Rwanda were only drug-crazed, disheveled thugs. How Eurocentric! On May 22 *The New York Times*'s "Styles of the Times" hit a new low (this happens once a week) as Emily Prager explained that the young killers of Mogadishu and Kigali are upholding the treasured African tradition of "warrior fashion." "Some people will undoubtedly consider it frivolous to mention fashion and killing in the same sentence," Prager concedes. Well, yes; but blithely she marches past such squareness. Just look at those "waist cinchers" worn by Somali gunmen: an "odd, Madonna-ish feminine accouterment." Next down the runway is a Rwandan militiaman decked out for an evening on the town in his long camouflage scarf and hood, beneath which his crazed eyes are barely visible: "a horribly stylish outfit and most chillingly effective." It appears that, for the hipsters of the *Times*, Rwanda has given a whole new meaning to knock-offs.

HAIL AND FAREWELL: It was one of the few encouraging facts about American publishing in recent years that Erwin A. Glikes flourished in its cheesy, greedy environs. He was one of the few into whose hands the dignity of books in America fell. Glikes's entrepreneurial energy was astounding (as the lists of Basic Books, Simon and Schuster and The Free Press attest), and he had an uncommon ability to turn a profit for seriousness; but the bottom line was not where he really lived. He was a creature of ideas. He was born in Belgium in 1937, a Jew come into a universe about to rid itself of its Jews, and in 1942 he fled with his family to the United States. In 1947 he became an American citizen, and came to personify the possibility of a decent patriotism. He began his career as a scholar of literature, and was assistant dean of Columbia College in 1968-69, an *anno* not so *mirabilis*. Glikes reacted allergically, that is, independently, to some of what he witnessed on Morningside Heights, and quit the academy for publishing. He became, famously, the conservative publisher of choice, whose books altered the intellectual landscape in the 1980s. But he was lacking in shrillness. He had a gift for calm in the middle of the storm; or, more precisely, he was a storm-merchant who knew the value of calm. He was a good friend of this magazine, and, like his comrades in the beleaguered book business, we will miss him and his poise. •

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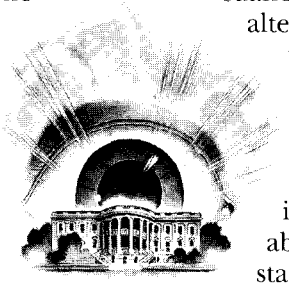
TRY AGAIN

By Fred Barnes

When Diane Sawyer asked former Vice President Dan Quayle about abortion on the May 5 "Prime Time Live," he did what so many other pro-life Republican politicians have done recently: he waffled. Quayle was hawking his new book, *Standing Firm*, which devotes less than a page to abortion. Was Quayle willing, Sawyer queried, to lead the fight to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*? Not quite. "I want to leave that aside," he said. "I think the best focus of my attention is to reduce the number of abortions and the best way to reduce the number of abortions is to talk about the tragedy of abortion." Several weeks later, in his weekly newspaper column, Quayle argued that Republicans should forget about *Roe*. "The constitutional issues are settled for the time being," he said. Still, Quayle insisted he's "strongly pro-life."



The Quayle position, a major retreat by one of the GOP's leading abortion foes, won't help Republicans avert a platform fight at the 1996 convention. Nor does it give anti-abortion Republican candidates and officeholders a comfortable position to defend in 1994. Why not? Because the pro-life movement, a powerful bloc in the party, doesn't accept it. Yet there's a modified position, now circulating quietly among Republicans who oppose abortion, that may ease the party's pain. It won't satisfy pro-choice Republicans, but it does take the edge off the GOP's 1992 platform, which called for a human life amendment banning abortion, with no exceptions.

Even ardently pro-life Republicans have trouble taking that line these days, partly because the chances of passing such an amendment are nil. William Kristol, Quayle's former chief of staff, says he's been struck by the "ineptness" and "defensiveness" of pro-lifers. "It's a combination of being too extreme on the one hand and out of touch on the other," says Kristol, who now heads the Project for the Republican Future. Also, with the Supreme Court's reaffirmation of *Roe* and Bill Clinton's election, the "movement got in a kind of crouch."

Last September Kristol and George Weigel, president of the conservative Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, discussed the agony of pro-life Republicans. They decided to devise a new position (Weigel wrote it) that would serve as "draft platform language" for 1996 and as talking points for Republicans now. It involves a strategic retreat, shifting the party from an absolutist to an incrementalist approach toward abortion. The human life amendment is jettisoned. But *Roe* v. *Wade* is not accepted, even temporarily. Instead, the Kristol-Weigel position says abortion should be taken out of the courts and decided by "the democratic process.... We support efforts to return to the people their constitutional right to deliberate on this question in their legislatures." The goal is "maximum feasible protection for the unborn."

Weigel says his experience watching pro-life Republicans matches Kristol's. "Why was it that, after years of developing in the pro-life movement a compelling and sophisticated argument for our position, we found politicians less and less able to carry this argument persuasively in public?" Good question. The answer, Weigel says, is they didn't have realistic goals and a strategy for achieving them. The 1992 platform was no help. "It left the political track solely at the federal level with the human life amendment, which I'm not sure ... is a doable option." And it didn't spell out a pro-life position that was "as politically powerful as it was intellectually and morally persuasive." All it said was that abortion should be outlawed and never subsidized, pro-life judges appointed, adoption encouraged.

Kristol-Weigel proposes a strategy "that recognizes the need for an extensive and ongoing process of public persuasion, and one that provides care, assistance and alternatives to women caught in the dilemma of unwanted pregnancy." The idea is to be pro-woman as well as pro-child. It stresses alternatives to abortion. Kristol insists the strategy is Lincolnian. Lincoln wanted to turn away from slavery gradually while preserving the union. Kristol and Weigel want to end abortion, only gradually and without, as their statement says, harming a "society deeply divided." In fact, they've tacitly accepted that abortion may never be banned, just curbed.

Why is Kristol-Weigel so important? It may allow the GOP to ease its position without an intraparty war. And it would bring the party nearer to the public's view: reduce the number of abortions, but no national ban. In the 1992 campaign Bill Clinton hewed to this line, saying abortion should be "safe, legal and rare." He has repeated this formulation as president, but has done nothing to make abortion rare. Kristol-Weigel leaps on this. "His administration has broken that promise by insisting on the expansion of what were already the most permissive abortion laws in the democratic world," it says.

One option not currently available to the GOP is dropping abortion altogether. According to a recent Republican National Committee poll of thousands of grassroots Republicans, 48 percent identified themselves as pro-life, 43 percent pro-choice. Questioned further, 58 percent want to curb abortion significantly or ban it, while 38 percent don't. Moreover, pro-lifers tend to be party activists, thus heavily represented at the national convention. If the platform doesn't oppose abortion, "they will walk," says Kristol.

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What's significant is that the modified position on abortion comes from two pro-life Republicans, neither of them identified with the Christian right. Kristol is Jewish, Weigel a Roman Catholic. Had pro-choice Republicans proposed the softened position, pro-lifers would have rejected it out of hand. But they've received Kristol-Weigel warmly. "It's desperately needed and well-timed," says Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council. Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition says a new abortion plank must be pro-life and favor overturning *Roe* v. *Wade*. Kristol-Weigel qualifies. My guess is the new Republican position on abortion has arrived. •

PITTSBURGH POSTCARD

DANDY ANDY

By Alexander Star

"Andy Warhol's message will resonate so long as we continue to do battle with our consumer souls," said Theresa Heinz, speaking from a makeshift podium in the backyard of the Warhol Museum. The consumer souls in her audience were not listening. "Tonight, we are all works of art," the ketchup heiress continued. It was the inaugural dinner of the country's largest single-artist museum, and the crowd would not shut up. The Payne-Whitney vice president seated to my left leaned over and reminisced about Warhol in the present tense: "I know Andy ... the thing about Andy is that he always eats before coming to a party."

Before Heinz spoke, Thomas Armstrong, the museum's director, had hustled to the podium and tried to instill order: "This is the sound of 1,100 egomaniacs who won't be quiet," he protested. Across the room, an older woman looked up in anger. "I take exception to that remark," she huffed as the gathering only grew noisier. At the center of every table buzzed a neon sculpture of Andy's head, available for $400.

The seven floors of Pittsburgh's new Warhol Museum are like a great department store of art. Before long you know where to find the lingerie and the diamond-dust shoes. The merchandise isn't only there to be admired, though. At its best, Warhol's work coolly poises itself between the appreciation and depreciation of its subjects; it raises them into icons and reduces them to worn-out currency. It's impossible to tell the flattery from the satire. Imelda Marcos loved it, and so did Marxist critics from Germany.

The museum tries to resolve this enigma by presenting Warhol as a master celebrity. "Who but Andy Warhol could transform himself once again into a sought-after figure in the social life of New York?" reads one wall-panel. Roy Lichtenstein and the other Pop artists who influenced Warhol can hardly be found. But there are plaques in honor of Diana Vreeland and Halston (he and Andy "spent much time together enjoying their entrée into New York's richly textured social and cultural life"). Not surprisingly, the less attractive aspects of the Warhol milieu are airbrushed out. We're told that the "freedom" of Warhol's Factory "inspired a generation." You'd never know, of course, that the closer members of that generation got to Warhol, the more likely they were to jump out of windows, often clutching Coke bottles and rosaries as they fell.

At a 1 a.m. symposium, the Warhol era was recalled by a panel of its survivors. Billy Name, the Factory's studio director, insisted it was a "myth" that he'd once spent a year living inside a closet (though it seemed plausible). The retired superstar Ultra Violet wore a dress emblazoned with her name, and mused about the Buddhist themes in Warhol's work. And Taylor Mead, once an underground film legend, berated the panel for its sycophancy. "Never worship a human being," he warned, observing that "Hitler was a great talker, too." Name and Ultra Violet hawked their books; Mead pleaded for someone to publish his. Chris Makos, Andy's personal photographer, interrupted the others to announce: "I have a cable T.V. show in New York. It's on channel 35. You know, the porno channel."

Finally, Name summed things up: "Do you know why people loved Andy? Because Andy loved people like us." The panelists spent the rest of the night huddled together, exchanging insults and signing autographs. No one knew exactly where they had come from or where they would go once the weekend was over.

Throughout the festivities, Pittsburgh's pride in its native son collided with a certain uneasiness. Warhol's last visit to the city was in 1987, on the occasion of his burial; a copy of *Interview* magazine and a bottle of Esteé Lauder perfume were laid in the grave. This time, a procession of local businessmen, New York art dealers and Warhol veterans pondered the location of the Warhol treasury. "Andy completely dissociated himself from Pittsburgh," insisted Name. And indeed, there's not much evidence of Warhol's affection for his hometown. He called the tenement apartment where he was born "the worst place I've ever been," and often told interviewers that he came from other places, such as Hawaii. When he moved to New York at 20, his first love was Truman Capote. And it's easy to imagine that he eventually compared himself to Holly Golightly, leaving her dust-bowl home behind and reinventing herself as the fragile center of a breezily glamorous world. Warhol's first real break as a commercial artist was to illustrate an article in *Glamour* called "Success Is a Job in New York." At the Factory symposium, Ultra Violet ungenerously remarked that "success in Pittsburgh is having a job."

Nonetheless, the museum makes a case for Warhol as an honorary citizen, emphasizing his industrious work

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habits and regular church attendance. At the dinner the theme of civic uplift was explicit. "Pittsburgh is the city that saved my life," said a frail Governor Robert Casey as the rattle of silverware and small talk drowned him out. "I'll say it again: Pittsburgh is the city that saved my life," he went on, before adding that Warhol is a "symbol of the creativity and energy that have come to characterize Pittsburgh." Heinz acknowledged that "in many ways Andy's later life was a repudiation of the hardship and provinciality" of his childhood. "Regardless," she said, "his past has embraced him."

It's usually thought that Gertrude Stein's ode to emptiness, "There is no there there," refers to Oakland, California. But Stein was really talking about Pittsburgh's Oakland district, the neighborhood of row houses where both she and Warhol grew up: "What is the use of my having come from Oakland it was not natural to have come from there ... there is no there there." Observing the willful vacancy of Warhol's art, it's hard not to think that Warhol might have taken Stein's adage as an agenda. With systematic cunning, he simultaneously magnified and trivialized everything he touched. His museum does the same to him. •

Why we flip-flopped on Macedonia.

GREEK PIQUE

By Hanna Rosin

On February 9, at the State Department's behest, President Clinton announced that the United States would recognize the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. Less than a month later, however, Clinton backpedaled: the United States would not open an embassy in the republic's capital of Skopje after all. Such flip-flops are nothing new, but this one was particularly instructive. It shows what happens when a well-organized Democratic interest group meets a president who, at least when it comes to foreign policy, just can't say no to anyone.

The key players on the Macedonian issue were Senator Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, the nation's highest-ranking Greek-American elected official; Representative Michael Bilirakis of Florida; and several prominent Greek-Americans with links to the Democrats, including lobbyist Andrew Manatos, an assistant secretary of commerce under Carter who was once paid $100,000 by Greece for "advice on tourism." After learning that the United States would recognize Macedonia, the group began mobilizing Greek-American opposition. In one week the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) collected 30,000 signatures on a protest petition. In New Jersey, Clinton's picture was booed by a crowd of 22,000 when it flashed on a video screen at a concert by the popular Greek singer Jorgas Delaras.

In the wake of Clinton's decision, Sarbanes, Bilirakis and Manatos persuaded fourteen members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to sign a letter urging him to delay carrying out the policy for two weeks. With the help of California businessman Angelo Tsakopolous, the president of Greek-Americans for Clinton, and Chicago businessman Andy Athens, they wangled an audience with the president. On March 9 Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and national security adviser Anthony Lake met with Manatos, Sarbanes, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Iakovos and thirteen other prominent Greek-Americans; no one from the State Department was invited. Afterward, Clinton announced he would wait to put an embassy in Skopje until the dispute with Greece was resolved, leaving the United States in the odd position of stationing 600 troops on the Serbian border to protect a country where it had no ambassador.

Macedonia is only the latest crusade for Greek-Americans, who first made their clout felt when they pushed the Ford administration to impose an arms embargo on Turkey after its 1974 invasion of Cyprus. The network stuck together, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for Democratic candidates. Today, their complaint centers on three issues: the name "Macedonia," which Greece considers the exclusive title of its northern province; Macedonia's constitution, which promises protection for Macedonians outside its borders; and its flag, which features the Hellenistic sixteen-point star.

Do the Greeks have a legitimate gripe? On the name and the flag, yes. The star—called the Star of Vergina—is a 2,300-year-old Greek national symbol. It was inscribed on the tomb of Alexander the Great's father, Philip of Macedon, under a Greek inscription that today's Macedonians could not read, because their language resembles Bulgarian. Americans not versed in the bloody history of the Balkans may not appreciate the deep-rooted emotions that these symbols still arouse in the Greeks. Sitting in his Washington office opposite portraits of his stern ancestors in Crete, Manatos tells of a wealthy Greek-American businessman who rolls up his sleeves to reveal scars from wounds he suffered in the 1946 civil war. During that war 100,000 Greek loyalists died fighting Marshall Tito's campaign to unite Macedonian territories in Greece with what was then Yugoslavia. "It's as bad as if the U.S. legitimized Nazi swastikas or KKK symbols," Manatos says of U.S. recognition. "We know that ten or fifteen years from now, people will die."

But the rest of the Greek case is larded with propaganda. AHEPA complains about the constitution's expansionist language, yet the preamble in question is from the 1944 constitution of the Macedonian Anti-Fascist Assembly, not from the current one. Another disputed article was amended in January 1992 to disavow "terri-

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torial pretensions toward any neighboring states." AHEPA's smoking gun—a map in a second-grade history textbook that shows Macedonia encompassing the northern province of Greece—is actually a regional map of the Balkans that doesn't note any political borders. Even if the Macedonian government wanted to expand, it would be difficult, since its army could field only three rusty tanks against Greece's massive NATO-equipped forces.

Given the lack of an immediate threat from Macedonia, none of these symbolic issues warrants Greece's drastic embargo imposed in February, which could have grave consequences. Trade with Greece makes up 80 percent of Macedonia's foreign commerce; the boycott virtually shuts down the Macedonian economy, potentially destabilizing a republic that was the site of two Balkan wars before World War I. Macedonia is already in the delicate spot of having to enforce a United Nations trade embargo against Serbia, its aggressive neighbor to the north. Bulgaria, too, has historical claims on the territory. It has recognized Macedonia, but the Bulgarian government's science minister gave a speech last month declaring there is no such thing as a Macedonian language—fighting words in this part of the world. And the leader of Macedonia's increasingly radicalized Albanian minority—about 30 percent of the population—has openly declared his intent to unite with Albania. "The more the economy deteriorates the more [the Albanians] sit at cafés and drink and smoke and discuss politics," says Ljubica Acevska, a representative in the Washington office of the Republic of Macedonia. "That's the danger of the embargo."

Some of the Greek lobby's success is due to good timing and a feel for the administration's confused, reactive Balkan policy. After every European nation had recognized Macedonia months earlier, Clinton waited to announce diplomatic relations until things looked embarrassingly bloody; he acted less than a week after the mortar shell exploded in Sarajevo's central market, killing sixty-eight and wounding 200. The lobby then weighed in on diplomatic relations and got Clinton to reverse his decision when things looked brighter—ten days after the Serbs had retreated from Gorazde in response to the U.N. ultimatum. Greek-Americans didn't have to press Clinton not to criticize Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou on the embargo when he visited the White House in April. They knew Papandreou would be useful as a booster for Clinton's shaky Balkan policy. "It's important not to be too arrogant about our ability to dictate events so far from our shores," Clinton said. Papandreou, an avowed ally of the Orthodox Serbs, eagerly agreed. "It's a fire that can spread very fast," he said. "Our fear is that step by step we will be dragged into a land war."

In March Clinton appointed former undersecretary of state Matthew Nimitz as a special envoy to resolve the dispute. So far neither side wants to make the first concession. The Macedonians say capitulating would teach the Greeks that blackmail works. The Greeks want to take the issue of Macedonia's name off the table, leaving the door open for future embargoes. But both sides are showing signs of budging, and have agreed to resume talks on June 13. Back home, meanwhile, it's business as usual for the Greek-American lobby: Bilirakis is pushing a bill that would bar the United States from ever establishing diplomatic relations with Macedonia. And Eugene Rossides, president of the American Hellenic Institute, is trashing the negotiations. "This special envoy is camouflage," he says. "They're trying to bully the victim." •

AFTER YOU'VE GONE

JACKIE'S RIDE

By Camille Paglia

The death of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis inspired testimonials of love and respect across all divisions of social class and political party. She was the most famous woman in the world in a long period following that of the great stars of old Hollywood and preceding that of our own pop princesses, Diana and Madonna. Why?

Merely as a paragon of high fashion and elegant good taste, Jackie could not have retained the affection of millions over a span of several decades. It was her baptism by gunfire that deified her. Her extraordinary behavior during and after the assassination of her husband gave her a permanent place in history. In the blood-spattered limousine in Dallas, an archetypal *pietà* was forced on her. Cradling the shattered head of the head of state in her lap, she became Michelangelo's grieving Madonna, caught between horror and admiration at the wounded body of her beautiful son. The Catholic Andy Warhol paid her tribute in his Duccio-like checkerboard altarpiece of her as national *mater dolorosa.*

Jackie's heroism was made possible by a neglected element of her famous biography. Everyone knows about her athleticism and her devotion to fitness, her love of horses from childhood. What we admire in her deportment in crisis is dressage, the art of English horsemanship, an aristocratic style that descends from the prerevolutionary ancien régime of the eighteenth century. When people say Jackie is "the closest thing to royalty" that American democracy has ever seen, this is what they really mean. Dressage is a form of radical minimalism, of hierarchical stillness and repose. The rider's signals to the horse are completely invisible. Jackie, masquerading as the perfect adornment, was a master of manipulation and control—not of the psychological realm, where she was at the mercy of adulterous men, but of the physical realm, which she

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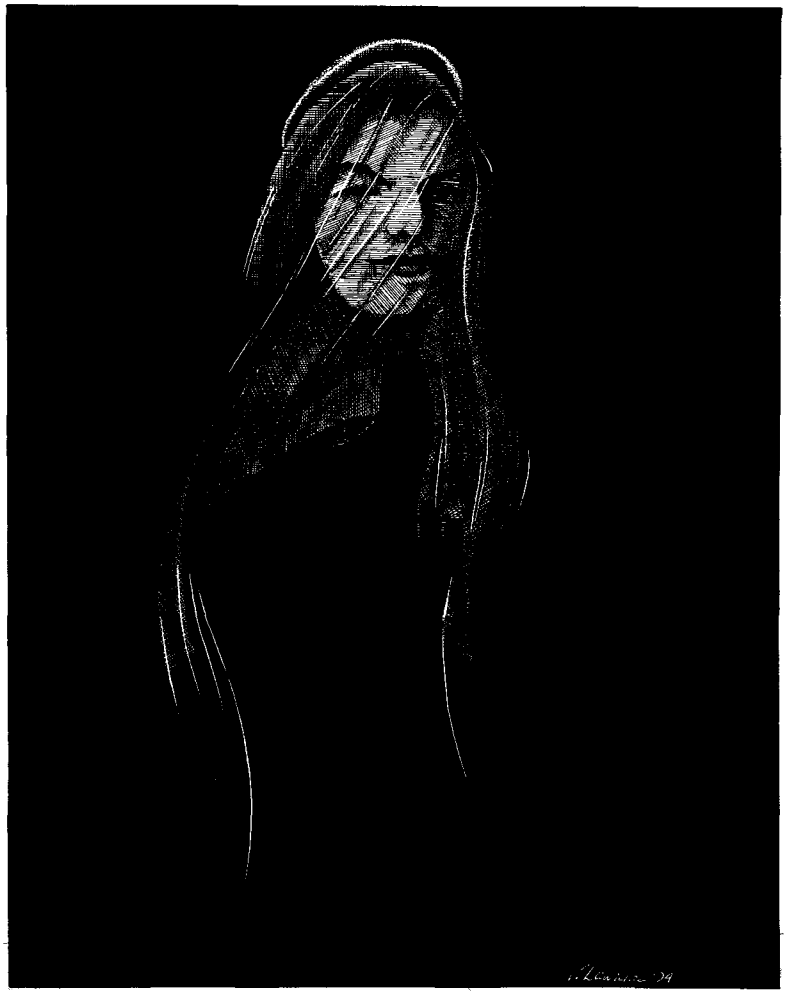
In ancient Greek culture, the image of horse and rider represented the victory of reason in civilization's eternal battle with anarchy. As her parents' marriage disintegrated, a very young Jacqueline Bouvier found in the public ritualism of riding a life structure that served her well to the end. She became a custodian of the forms—posting herself at Lyndon Johnson's side as he swore the oath of office on Air Force One, doggedly celebrating her son's third birthday on the day of his father's burial. The educative paradigm in equitation—the process of "schooling" colts—was fulfilled in her success in rearing two unpretentious children who have escaped the whirlwind of self-destructiveness that so often envelops the scions of celebrity.

Reflecting today on Jackie's stoical management of self and surroundings after the assassination, we may rue the disrespect with which my '60s generation treated the artifice of etiquette. It was tradition and ceremony that reordered the nation's blasted emotions. As we fled the suffocating conformism of the '50s, our indifference to the positive aspects of convention stranded us in the mawkish Great Wallow of victim culture. Jackie's classy grace under pressure, her cool rejection of complaint or self-pity, demonstrate the redemption possible in repression, sublimation and silence.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Riding also gave her great reflexes. One of the absurd claims in C. David Heymann's *A Woman Named Jackie* is that when she scrambled up onto the back of the limousine in Dallas, Jackie was fleeing for her life. Apollo preserve us from bookworm biographers! Were Jackie seeking safety, the crouching "forward seat" in jumping horses would have put her on the floor of the car. In lunging for a fragment of her husband's skull, she placed herself directly in the line of fire, an act of great courage for which she has never been honored.

As a diva who enamored the world's paparazzi, Jackie had interesting ambiguities. In *Sexual Personae*, I commented on her resemblance to perverse, perhaps hermaphroditic images in Aubrey Beardsley and cited a diary entry in which Cecil Beaton records her "suspicion of a mustache" and her "big boyish hands and feet" (apparently size 10AA). Unlike her romantic rival, Marilyn Monroe, Jackie did not base her female power on an ample bosom. Rather, her mannequin's silhouette was linear, in the classical ballet style of Audrey Hepburn. A rigorous dieter, Jackie may have been one step from anorexic, but we never noticed it, because of her wide, serene moon face, with its dreamy gaze and Mona Lisa smile.

In modern iconography, Jackie belongs to the Gene Tierney category of brooding brunettes, mysterious and withdrawn. Despite an undeveloped and whispery voice and big, frightened eyes, they have a steely resolve. Jackie's influence as a trendsetter of modern female personae can be seen in Anouk Aimée, Mary Tyler Moore, Marlo Thomas, Barbara Parkins and Stefanie Powers. It is a vibrant, mature heterosexual style, physically active and mentally alert, but without feminist stridency or anger—a still-attractive model of attentiveness to men without subservience to them.

What is indelible now is Jackie's fortitude and valor as a survivor of the blood sport of male politics. Some strange law of retribution cut down the wheeler-dealers in Dallas and spared the women at their sides, as in a Greek tragedy such as Euripides' *The Trojan Women*. The stained suit Jackie refused to change that day documented the polarities of womanhood: the pastel pink of girlhood and romance and the barbaric blood red of birth and death. That garment, like the Shroud of Turin, was a pictogram of her life story, with its failed pregnancies and widowhood. This was a woman who thought in universals: a rose garden, an eternal flame, a riderless horse, named for her father, whose skittishness in the funeral parade expressed uncontrolled male libido, the one beast Jackie never tamed.

CAMILLE PAGLIA's third book, *Vamps and Tramps*, will be published by Vintage in September.

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STOP JOB DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LESBIAN AND GAY AMERICANS

Most Americans agree that employing the best possible person is fair, good business and best for America. Yet, only eight states prohibit anti-gay discrimination in the workplace, and no federal law protects lesbian and gay Americans from being fired simply because of prejudice and bigotry. We join with other community leaders across the nation to call for federal legislation to prohibit discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

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Hon. Arne H. Carlson
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Casey Kasem
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Former Mayor of San Diego

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Civil Rights Leader

Hundreds of prominent Americans have joined together as part of the Human Rights Campaign Fund's *National Endorsement Campaign* to call for legislation ending discrimination against gay people in the workplace. This is a partial list. Organizational names are included for identification purposes only. If you would like to add your name to the National Endorsement Campaign and make it possible for similar ads to be placed in other publications, please contact the Public Policy Department of the Human Rights Campaign Fund at 202-628-4160.

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Russia's new micropolitics.

LOCAL COLOR

By Stephen Holmes

Nizhnii, the former closed city of Gorky, is a sprawling town. With a population of around 1.4 million, it is home to many foundering defense-related industries, and it suffers the same problems as other urban centers: crime, low wages, a crumbling public transportation system, a shortage of housing, a poisoned environment. Still, its old hilltop center is roughly beautiful—dilapidated, but full of lovely prerevolutionary architecture. And as Russian cities go, it is a showplace of economic reform, having privatized nearly 70 percent of its small businesses. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has praised the Nizhnii Novgorod *oblast* ("region") as a model for the entire country.

When I visited Nizhnii in March, however, I didn't hear much about its unparalleled achievements, for local elections were about to take place. They were set for Sunday, March 27, meaning the usual flag-wavers were at each other's throats. Almost everyone was swept up in the raging feud between two former soul mates, "reform Governor" Boris Nemtsov and "reform Mayor" Dimitrii Bednyakov. Bednyakov was running in a first-ever mayoral race against Nemtsov's sidekick, Evgenii Krestyaninov, the ex-speaker of the *oblast* soviet. The race was nothing like a competition between prominent political parties: communist, liberal, national-populist. Rather, it was a nonideological tussle between "independent" candidates, both of whom kept their distance from Moscow.

Here, it seems, is the latest debilitating battle in the new Russia: neither the legislature versus the executive in the capital, nor even center versus periphery, but executive versus executive in the provinces. As Moscow loses its grip on the rest of the country, regional authorities have started wrangling among themselves. In addition to the warring of liberals and hard-liners on the national scene, and the competition for agricultural, defense and oil-gas subsidies, we are now seeing struggles for control of local resources between *oblast* and city officials.

The form and origins of such struggles differ across Russia's eleven time zones, but the pattern is a common one. In Nizhnii, the once-smooth working relations between the governor and the mayor began to break down last fall over questions about the budget, taxation and shareholder control of privatized enterprises. Just as Nemtsov had earlier worked to pry his *oblast* away from Moscow, Bednyakov was plotting to wrest control of the city's tax revenues from the *oblast*. His strategy was simple: pass a city charter by popular referendum, giving the mayor's office increased budgetary authority, and win the mayor's race in a competitive election, achieving an edge in legitimacy over Nemtsov, whose office is appointive.

A belligerent chain-smoker with a beefy physique, the fortyish Bednyakov looks every inch an ex-professor at the local police academy. When I visited him, he was eager to talk about the election (which he was afraid might be rigged), about the outrageous bias of the local broadcast media against his candidacy and about how his former ally Nemtsov had begun to treat the *oblast* like his personal fief. Bednyakov told me that Nemtsov could find no defects in the proposed city charter but opposed it anyway, as a personal vendetta, simply because he—Bednyakov—didn't bend to the governor's writ. The arch-villain of the piece, he explained, was Andrei Klementiev, a pornographer who languished a half-dozen years in prison under the super-puritan Soviet regime and amassed a fortune in the shipbuilding industry after he was released. Nemtsov was in Klementiev's pocket, or so Bednyakov was telling anyone who would listen.

After our talk I made my way to the local citadel through knee-deep snow. By sheer accident, I stumbled into one of Russia's now-hardly-noticed "historical" events: the last meeting of the last *oblast* soviet in the entire system. In October 1993 President Boris Yeltsin had ordered the dissolution of the hierarchies of all legislative councils and decreed that elections for new local assemblies be held by the end of March 1994. The Nizhnii *oblast* soviet was temporarily exempted, but with elections to the new regional assembly only a few days away, the old body had finally run its course. Nemtsov, a charismatic ex-physicist in his mid-30s, had come to strut his stuff.

As he was about to address the soviet, though, a self-proclaimed deputy from the countryside glued himself to a microphone and insisted on being recognized. "Before we begin," he said, "I would like those of you sitting on the dais to report on how much foreign currency you have spent on personal trips abroad." Not to be upstaged, then-speaker Krestyaninov coolly asked the assembly if they wished to have this subject discussed. When they overwhelmingly said they didn't, Krestyaninov quickly introduced Nemtsov. Standing at the podium in an imposing helmsman-of-the-*oblast* pose, he elaborated with palpable gusto on his achievements—even though, he added, much remained to be done.

Many of the public officials I met in Nizhnii looked suspiciously like ex-boxers who still spent hours every day lifting weights at the local gym. (Indeed, a few of those involved in privatization and taxation, where opportunities for walking off with state property are concentrated, were disarmingly candid about their KGB backgrounds.) Krestyaninov, though, is not one of these bulky fellows. Thin-faced, goateed and almost professorial in demean-

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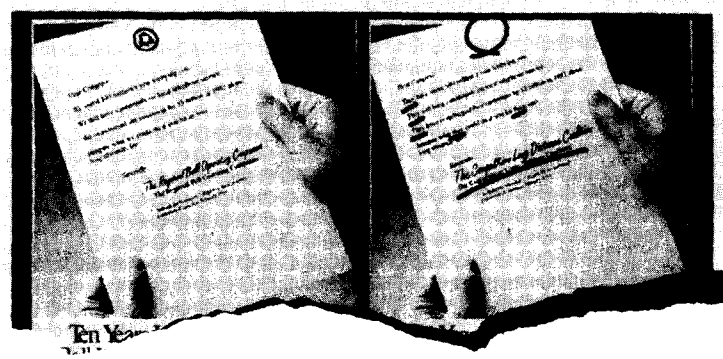
MAY 5, 1994 · USA TODAY

INSIDE BUSINESS

Bogus Bell ad runs accidentally

The full-page advertisement in the Washington-Baltimore edition of *The Wall Street Journal* Monday contained what looked like a remarkable confession.

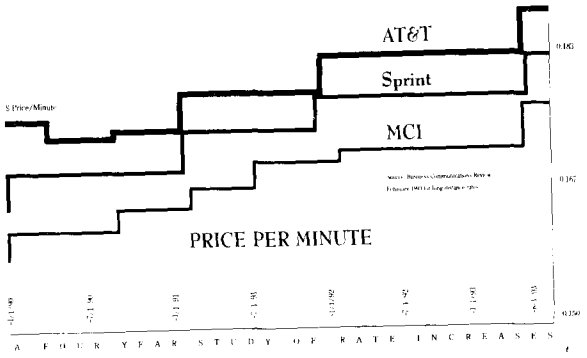
A letter addressed to Congress, carrying the Bell telephone logo and signed by "The Regional Bell Operat-g Companies" said, ong other things, that, e overcharged our cus-hers by $3 billion in 1992 one." The letter went on, magine what we could do ou let us into long dis-



erences to "They." But in a mix-up at *The Journal* ad ran anyway Monda without the changes. woke up Monday an the ad," says co spokesman Mik "They made a m "It probably have run (Mon form," says Jo man Roger M Wednesd ad appear

AT&T's Bogus Ad

WHOOPS! AT&T, MCI and Sprint just got caught trying to misrepresent our position in the debate over competition in telecommunications. Both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* made the AT&T, MCI and Sprint "Long Distance Coalition" revise their ad, and *USA Today* labeled their ad "BOGUS." Unfortunately, BOGUS claims by AT&T, MCI and Sprint aren't news to us, or to America's consumers. For years, AT&T, MCI and Sprint have advertised lower prices at the same time they raised their rates in lockstep. America's long distance consumers deserve the straight story and real competition in long distance. Don't let AT&T, MCI and Sprint's BOGUS misrepresentations substitute for real competition.



AT&T's Bogus Competition

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or, he was remarkably diffident and fidgety. He clearly had been thrown off by Bednyakov's recriminations. The high point of our meeting was his colorful defense of Klementiev, the pornographer who is Nemtsov's wealthy backer. The pornography charge should not be taken so seriously, Krestyaninov said: Klementiev "just liked to watch Jane Fonda movies," something that is fine today but was simply not allowed in Soviet days.

The same afternoon, presidential hopeful Grigorii Yavlinski waltzed into town to stage a press conference ostensibly in support of Nemtsov and Krestyaninov. Yavlinski has an interest in Nizhnii's continuing economic health; he was partly responsible for charting the small-scale privatization that Nemtsov began to put into effect here several years ago. Jovial and arrogant, he paddled his fingers lovingly on his giant stomach throughout the press conference and did his best to keep the reporters amused. But he also made a serious point: so long as the heads of administrative regions are Yeltsin appointees, the popular election of mayors will muck up *oblast*/city relations. Yavlinski wasn't supporting Krestyaninov's bid; he was saying—cannily—that for now, mayors in general should be appointed. No democratically elected mayor could be expected to defer to a regional administrator appointed by the president.

On Thursday evening a fairly polite T.V. debate was held between the two candidates, but their courteous shadow-boxing was deceptive. The next day Nemtsov accused Bednyakov of installing a coffee machine in one of his seven cars, while rumors started circulating that Krestyaninov was a Jew. That night, just before midnight, Krestyaninov appeared on one of the local, Nemtsov-controlled T.V. stations. Looking distraught, he told the viewers how painful it had been for him to suffer Bednyakov's slanders: "I have one question to ask you, Dimitrii Bednyakov. If you believed all of these baseless calumnies about me and the governor, why did you not say them earlier? Why did you wait until two days before the election?"

This was all pablum, of course, but then came the shocking denouement. Krestyaninov said he had peered deeply into his conscience and had decided that there would be no peace in Nizhnii if either he or Bednyakov became mayor. Thus, with a rueful heart, he was going to withdraw from the mayoral race.

Nonplussed, the program's host shook his head and told his viewers that he would keep them informed of any new developments. And indeed, about an hour later, Anatolii Nekrasov, the head of the *oblast* electoral commission, appeared on the same station. Sitting stiff-backed, tugging authoritatively at his lapels, Nekrasov disclosed that, according to electoral law, if one candidate withdraws from the mayoral race, the election must be postponed indefinitely.

The tangled story behind Nizhnii's electoral comedy has yet to be made wholly public, but one thing is certain: in politics as in business, competition will always be a risky affair, because our competitor might throw us into the shade. Nemtsov smelled danger, feared being walloped at the polls and realized that an electoral victory would make an already-mutinous mayor virtually impossible to control. Perhaps the managers of GAZ, one of the city's mammoth automobile factories, informed Nemtsov that their 120,000 workers were going to support Bednyakov. Or perhaps Nemtsov sensed that the Russians' traditional sympathy for victims was beginning to tilt the playing field to Bednyakov's advantage. Or maybe he came to see the reasonableness of Yavlinski's hostility to the whole idea of having any kind of elected mayor.

Whatever his reasons, Nemtsov decided that it would be better to scotch the elections ahead of time, however brazenly undemocratic that might look. He then cajoled Yeltsin into sacking Bednyakov and appointing another Nemtsov ally as mayor. (Krestyaninov was made Yeltsin's special envoy to the *oblast*.) Such a farce won't enhance Nizhnii's international renown as a progressive city, of course, or Nemtsov's own sedulously cultivated credibility as a principled liberal. But politics ain't beanbag—especially local politics.

STEPHEN HOLMES is editor of the University of Chicago's *East European Constitutional Review.*

The economy's problems—and Clinton's.

GROWING PAINS

By Robert Shapiro

There are dark shadows on President Clinton's political horizon, but they aren't being cast by Korea, Haiti, crime or accusations about his private life. His real problem—today and in 1996—is the economy.

The economy? Isn't that an area where Clinton has done well? Granted, he certainly hasn't neglected economic policy. Through NAFTA, he has extended our global economic reach. His 1993 budget cut the federal government's share of the gross domestic product over the next five years to an average of 21.5 percent—sharply better than the Reagan/Bush average of 23 percent. Coupled with higher taxes, this slower spending has led to smaller deficits, which in turn have strengthened business investment by lowering long-term interest rates.

Still, there are distressing signs for the future. The latest forecast by the president's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) puts average annual growth for the rest of this decade at only 2.6 percent—less than the 2.8 percent annual average of the 1980s, which was not enough to generate real income gains for most families. If the

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A view from Washington

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Of all the steps taken in these last 12 years to evolve into a truly American organization, the single most important one has been the establishment of a U.S. manufacturing operation. Early on, Mitsubishi Motors entered into a joint manufacturing venture with Chrysler, and in 1988 the venture began producing cars under both companies' nameplates. In 1991, Mitsubishi Motors assumed full ownership of the venture, called Diamond-Star Motors.

Today, Diamond-Star, a two-million square-foot facility located in central Illinois, produces Mitsubishi Motors' two top selling cars in the U.S.—the Galant mid-size sedan and the Eclipse sports coupe. Together, they'll represent almost 60% of the passenger cars that we'll sell in the U.S. this year.

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Diamond-Star has an ongoing program to expand the use of North American production suppliers. Under this program, the operation will spend over $1 billion this year on North American purchases, representing almost a 200% content turnaround (on a constant calculation basis) since 1988. And those expenditures will account for the fact that locally sourced content in our Galants and Eclipses should exceed 70% under the Environmental Protection Agency's fuel economy reporting procedures. Our plans to increase the use of domestically built engines and transmissions will raise that domestic content level even higher in the future.

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To build cars in the U.S., Diamond-Star employs nearly 3,700 Americans. More than 3,000 are production and maintenance associates represented by the United Auto Workers. Countless other Americans are employed as a result of Diamond-Star's purchases of parts and services from facilities in 27 states.

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For further information, contact: Anna Stephens — Director, Government Relations/U.S. Operations at (202) 223-5732

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CEA is correct, and the lag in public and private investment persists, the 1990s will be the fourth consecutive decade of declining growth rates. Moreover, the president could find himself running for re-election during a downturn.

Fortunately, he has a way out. He can change course by following the three-part strategy he proposed as a candidate in 1992 but has moved away from since he took office. First, he can greatly expand public investment in worker training and education, basic technological research and transportation—the things that make every industry and the entire economy more productive. Second, he can promote much higher private investment by slashing the deficit, giving small businesses greater access to capital and relaxing regulation. Third, by aggressively pursuing free trade, he can increase foreign demand for our goods and heighten competitive pressures on our firms.

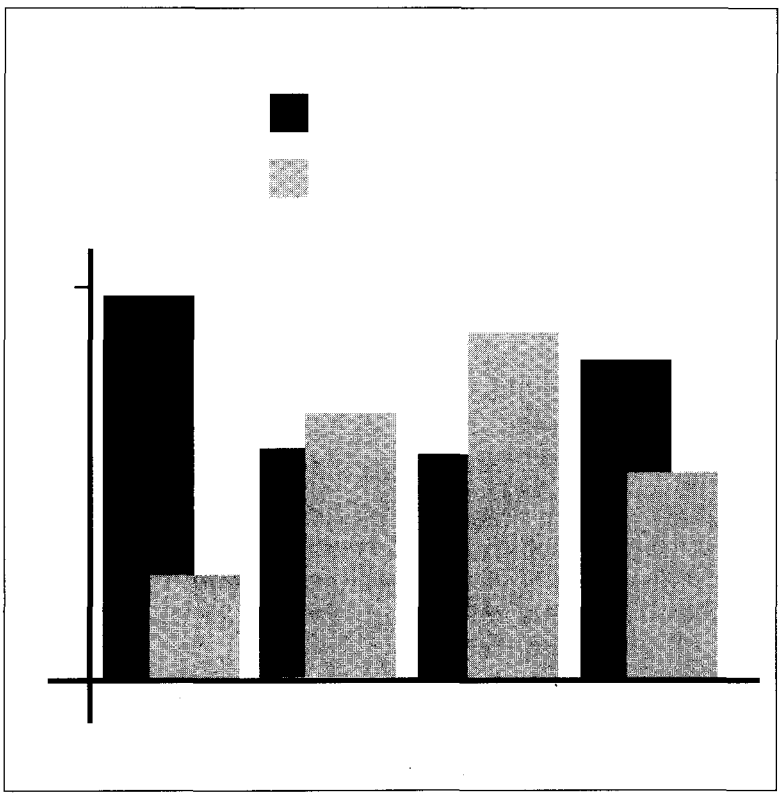

ILLUSTRATION BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Such a strategy would require Clinton and Congress to enact broad budget cuts early next year, to finance more public investment and to bring down long-term interest rates. The president would also have to push GATT though Congress this year. And he would have to spur entrepreneurial activity in the next two years by sharply deregulating small business this year. Of course, Clinton could choose to avoid such difficult steps with band-aid solutions. If he is serious, though, he can repair some of the economy's most stubborn structural problems—and do a lot to help his prospects for 1996.

To appreciate the president's predicament, it is important to understand the business cycle. In the economy, as in most else, all things good and bad eventually pass. Recessions usually end when slow times persist long enough to convince banks to charge less for loans, firms to cut their prices and workers to lower their wage demands. When that happens, an expansion begins: companies begin to invest more, customers begin to consume more, employers begin to hire more. Of course, that can't last forever, either. Business operations and payrolls expand only until all serviceable equipment is in use and all available workers are hired. The scramble for credit begins to push up interest rates, which slows the process, but with the economy going at full throttle, demand already in the pipeline allows firms to raise prices and workers to demand higher wages. That's when the Federal Reserve steps in and hikes interest rates even further. When it becomes too expensive to invest and consume more, the economy slows, price and wage pressures ease and a new cycle begins.

Even before the Fed raised interest rates in recent months, no one could seriously doubt that the current business cycle is, well, ripening. It began a little more than three years ago, in April 1991, and already has lasted longer than all but three of the eight business cycles since World War II. Yes, its first year (April 1991-March 1992) was slower than year one of any of the postwar cycles: demand grew by only 1.8 percent, versus an average of 6.5 percent (see below). The first year was so anemic that many Americans didn't feel it at all. But that was the end of the Bush era. As the campaign wound down and Clinton took office, demand grew much faster than the average for previous cycles: 4.5 percent versus 3.9 percent in year two (April 1992-March 1993), 5.9 percent versus 3.8 percent in year three (April 1993-March 1994).

On balance, however, the Clinton expansion is still below par. Year four—this year—will be slower than the fourth year of any other postwar cycle that lasted this long. And if you measure cycles on a quarterly basis, this one is the weakest. Past expansions averaged real quarterly GDP gains of 1.05 percent; to date, the Clinton cycle has averaged quarterly gains of only .75 percent. At that rate, the expansion will not produce significant income gains for most people.

The best the president can hope for is duration—a cycle that lasts long enough to grow out of its doldrums, or at least continues for two and a half more years. This, however, is no small hope. To survive through 1996, the current cycle will have to endure longer than all previous postwar expansions except the great ones of the 1960s (which lasted thirty-four quarters) and 1980s (which lasted thirty quarters). Why did those cycles last so long? The 1960s expansion nearly expired in 1966, when the Fed hiked interest rates too sharply, but it drew strength from persistent productivity gains, a Vietnam War stimulus and rising trade surpluses. The long

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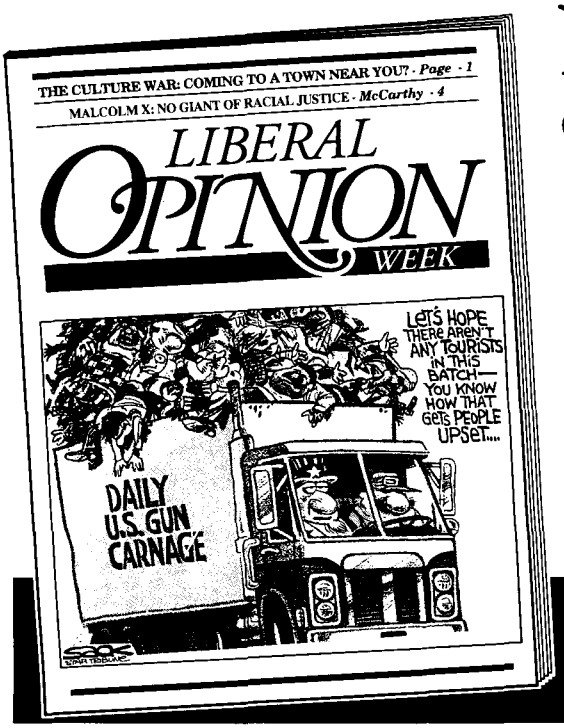
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life of the 1980s expansion, meanwhile, was due to several factors. The deep recession of 1981-82 left the economy with large amounts of idle equipment and labor, so the cycle had plenty to draw on before it expired. Inflation was held off for a while by competition from cheap imports. Finally, from 1986 to 1989, exports grew as the dollar weakened, and financial deregulation and falling interest rates supported a massive credit expansion that offset the declining budget deficits of those years.

In the '60s and the '80s, then, fiscal and monetary policies checked each other; rising foreign demand picked up the slack when domestic demand slipped; and there were bursts of new business activity. Unfortunately for the president, comparable conditions do not exist today.

No one knows when the Clinton expansion will naturally end, but it probably has at least one more year to go. Over the last twelve months it accelerated as long-term interest rates fell and a recapitalized banking system could finally respond to rising demand for credit at lower rates. Through the rest of 1994 and into 1995, strong corporate earnings should lead to healthy business investment, while higher cash flows resulting from mortgage refinancing and rising stock prices should drive consumer spending.

Good news aside, however, there is the matter of factory capacity. Expansions expire when the economy's capacity to expand runs out, but demand doesn't; it continues to grow after the economy's untapped capacity to meet it has been exhausted, giving rise to inflationary pressures. At that point the Fed steps down hard on demand with sharply higher interest rates, and the economy snaps back. Today, 83 percent of factory capacity is in full use, fewer than two percentage points from the peak "capacity utilization rate" of the 1980s expansion. There may be a bit more room this time since strong business investment and corporate downsizing have increased the economy's productive capacity: peak capacity utilization may now be about 86 percent. Still, given the speed with which businesses have been hiring new workers and bringing their unused capacity back on line, the Clinton expansion has about one year to go before it hits a wall.

The president may believe that the Fed can fine-tune the cycle through incremental interest rate hikes like the ones we've seen recently, so that his expansion never peters out. He should realize, though, that the Fed has never been able to pull off such delicate experiments in the past, and that its ability to do so now is less than it used to be because financial deregulation and global capital have weakened its hold over the supply and price of credit. He should also recognize the reality of politics. Will a GOP Fed chairman who tried to boost the economy for a GOP president in 1992—and failed—do better for a Democrat in 1996?

So what should the president do? He should change the conditions of the business cycle. He should adopt the following policy adjustments, which will address important structural problems and also raise the odds of sustaining growth for two and a half more years:

Entitlement reform. The most powerful tool at Clinton's disposal is his ability to alter the mix of fiscal and monetary policy. Fiscal stimulus won't help, however, because it would drive up long-term interest rates. Nor will short-term fiscal tightening, because it cannot be reliably timed to offset inflationary pressures.

Instead, the president should build a solution around permanent entitlement reforms that, once passed, will deliver a dose of lower long-term interest rates in mid- to late 1995. By cutting projected spending for future federal retirement and health care benefits, these reforms will lessen the borrowing burdens for the out-years covered by long-term rates without a short-term slowdown. The president should recommend that we (*a*) speed up the planned increase in the age for full federal retirement benefits, including Social Security, from 65 to 67; and (*b*) modestly cut spending and tax benefits on health care and retirement for people who earn at least $100,000. Enacting these reforms would make Clinton a genuine hero—the president who tamed the permanent deficit and helped create conditions for long-term American prosperity.

Cut and invest. At the same time Clinton asks middle-class citizens to accept less than they expected in future entitlements, he should offer them economic benefits today: greater public investment in their training and education, research and infrastructure. The president should pay for these investments by asking businesses to give up their industry-specific government subsidies, which impede productivity and efficiency by insulating favored corporations from competition and by raising the cost of labor and capital for everyone else.

What kinds of subsidies? The Progressive Policy Institute (of which I am vice president) recently published a list of sixty-eight provisions that cost $225 billion over five years: funding to expand and upgrade airline terminals, payments to farmers whose commodities sell at prices lower than those set by the government, tax credits for firms producing ethanol, etc. Phasing out these sweet deals won't be easy, but Clinton could overcome business opposition through a national commission based on the base-closing effort; it could produce a package of proposed cuts that Congress would have to vote up or down on without amendment. Such reforms would provide money for more public investment and perhaps tax relief for middle-class families. They also would allow the president to define himself as a champion of the general welfare and the scourge of special interests.

Promptly implement GATT. By early 1996 the Clinton expansion, like other protracted business cycles, will need rising foreign demand—especially if rising interest rates weaken domestic demand. This means that the president and Congress have to pass GATT this year and find the $15 billion required to finance it. Make no mistake: foreign trade will contract, not expand, if GATT fails in the United States. Even a year's delay could mean GATT's defeat, for the opposition of environmentalists and ultra-conservatives is maturing by the day.

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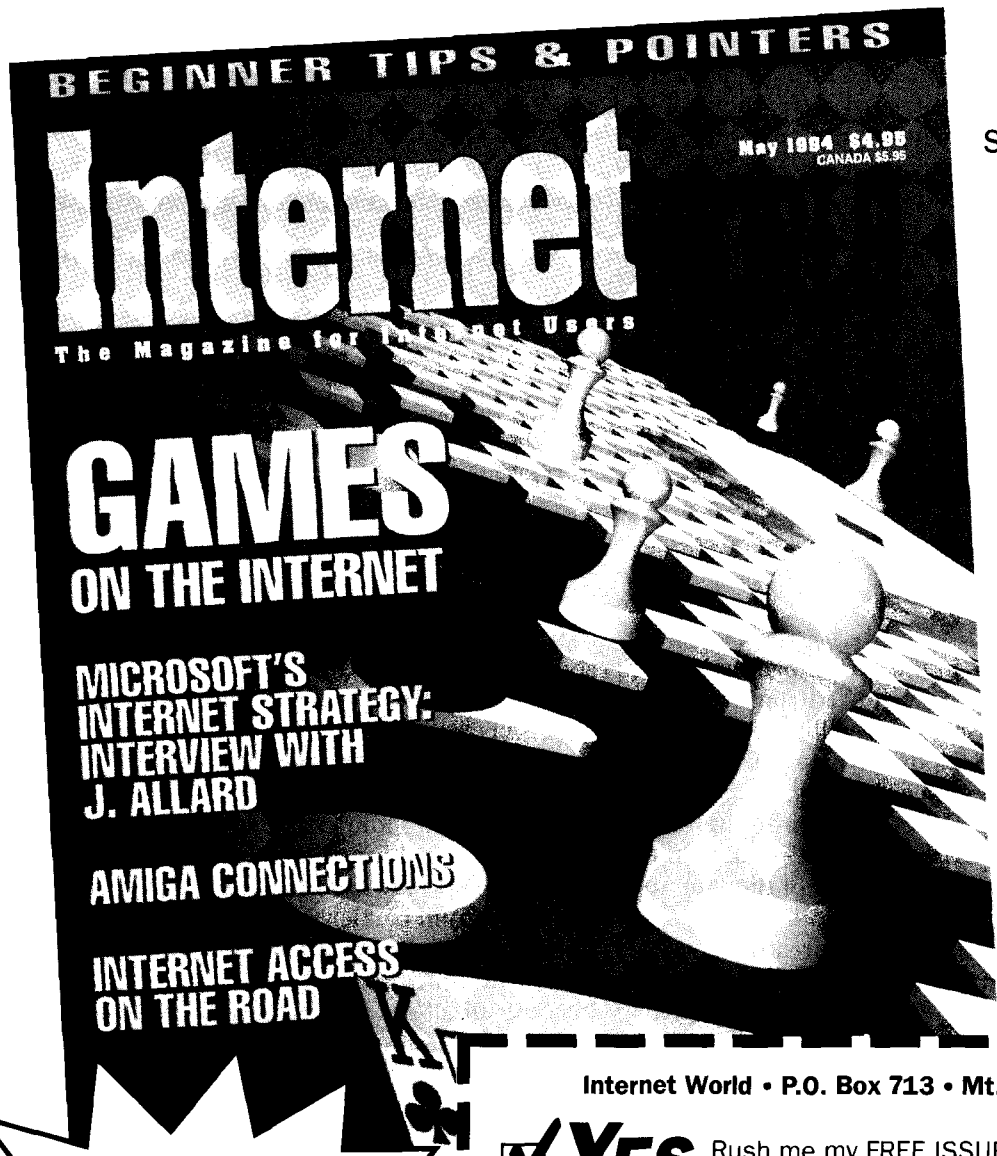

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Deregulate small business. Another element in an enduring expansion is well-timed business creation and job expansion. The president can promote both by relaxing federal regulation of small and new businesses, except in vital areas of health and safety. Most economists (like nearly all businesspeople) accept that regulation exerts a substantial drag on investment and employment. As it happens, the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 already directs agencies to consider ways of reducing regulatory burdens on small entities, yet they aren't doing it; after all, they're *regulatory* agencies. Through a series of executive orders, the president can make them cooperate—now.

Taken together, these policy moves could constitute Clinton's insurance policy for extending the expansion and avoiding the fearsome prospect of running for re-election in a stalled economy. The strategy is really nothing more than what he promised two years ago; by following through, he will demonstrate his commitment to our broad economic interests. And whatever the political outcome, he would leave a splendid legacy: a program of long-term fiscal restraint, renewed public investment, open trade and deregulation that resulted in a stronger American economy. •

Is the gay rights movement living in the past?

NOTES ON STONEWALL

By Bruce Bawer

Twenty-five years ago, in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, several patrons at the Stonewall bar in Greenwich Village, many of them flamboyant drag queens and prostitutes, refused to go quietly when police carried out a routine raid on the place. Their refusal escalated into five days of rioting by hundreds of people. Though it wasn't the first time anyone had contested the right of the state to punish citizens just for being gay, that rioting marked a pivotal moment because news of it spread in every direction and sparked the imaginations of countless gay men and lesbians around the world. It made them examine, and reject, the silence, shame and reflexive compliance with prejudice to which most of them had simply never conceived a realistic alternative.

There is something wondrous about Stonewall, and it is this: that a mere handful of late-night bar patrons, many of them confused, lonely individuals living at the margins of society, started something that made a lot of lesbians and gay men do some very serious thinking of a sort they had never quite done before—thinking that led to action and to a movement. It was the beginning of a revolution in attitudes toward homosexuality. How odd it is to think that those changes could all be traced back to a drunken riot at a Greenwich Village bar on a June night in 1969. But they can. And that's why Stonewall deserves to be commemorated.

Today, however, Stonewall is not only commemorated but mythologized. Many gay men and lesbians routinely speak of it as if it was a sacred event that lies beyond the reach of objective discourse. They talk as if there was no gay rights activism at all before Stonewall, or else they mock pre-Stonewall activists as Uncle Toms. They recite the name "Stonewall" itself with the same reverence that American politicians reserve for the names of Washington and Lincoln. And indeed the word is perfectly suited to the myth, conjuring as it does an image of a huge, solid barrier separating the dark ages prior to the day that Judy Garland died from the out-loud-and-proud present. Every year, on what has long since become an all-purpose gay holiday—a combination of Independence Day, May Day, Mardi Gras and, since the advent of HIV, Memorial Day as well—millions ritualistically revisit the raucous, defiant marginality of Stonewall in marches around the world. This year in New York, on the twenty-fifth anniversary, the ritual will reach a climax. For many, Stonewall has already become a Platonic model of gay activism—and, indeed, a touchstone of gay identity.

A few weeks ago, in a sermon about an entirely different subject, the rector of the Episcopal church I belong to in New York used the phrase "the politics of nostalgia." The phrase has stuck in my mind, for it seems to me that both sides of the gay rights struggle are trapped in what may well be characterized as a politics of nostalgia. Many of those who resist acceptance of homosexuality and reject equal rights for gay men and lesbians know on some level that they are wrong, but they cling to old thinking because a change, however just, seems to them a drastic departure from the comfortable world of "don't ask, don't tell." Some gay people, likewise,

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cling to what might be called the Stonewall sensibility, reacting defensively and violently, as if to some horrendous blasphemy or betrayal, even to the hint that perhaps the time has come to move in some way beyond that sensibility. Such people often declare proudly that they have been "in the trenches" for twenty-five years, which is to say that in a way they have been reliving Stonewall every day since June 1969.

Yet every day *can't* be Stonewall—or shouldn't. And in fact the time *has* come to move beyond the Stonewall sensibility. For, thanks largely to developments that can trace their inspiration to that barroom raid, some things *have* changed since 1969. Levels of tolerance have risen; gay rights laws have been passed; in the last quarter-century, and especially recently, gay Americans have come out of the closet in increasing numbers. As a result, it has become clear to more and more heterosexuals that gay America is as diverse as straight America—that many of the people who were at the Stonewall bar on that night twenty-five years ago represent an anachronistic politics that largely has ceased to have salience for gay America today. To say this is not to condemn people who consider themselves members of that fringe or to read them out of the gay community. It is simply to say that for gay America to continue to be defined largely by its fringe is a lie, and that this lie, like all lies about homosexuality, needs to be countered vigorously. The Stonewall sensibility—like the Stonewall myth—has to be abandoned.

On May 6 *The New York Times* described the arguments among gay leaders about the planning of Stonewall 25, the forthcoming New York event that will culminate in a march on the United Nations. Some of these leaders worried that Stonewall 25 wouldn't focus enough on the fact that many of the Stonewall heroes were transvestite and transsexual hustlers. One woman wanted, in her words, to "radicalize" Stonewall 25. "Stonewall," she told the *Times*, "was a rebellion of transgender people, and this event has the potential to reduce our whole culture to an Ikea ad."

It is strange to read the words of those who speak, on the one hand, as if Stonewall, in and of itself, achieved something once and for all time that gay Americans are now free to celebrate, and, on the other, as if the kind of growing acceptance that is represented by the depiction of a middle-class gay couple in a furniture commercial on network T.V. is bad news, a threat to a Stonewall-born concept of gay identity as forever marginal. It would almost seem as if those leaders don't realize that Stonewall was only part of a long, complex process that is still proceeding, and that the best way to honor it is to build upon it by directing that process as wisely and responsibly as we can.

In the May 3 issue of the gay magazine *The Advocate*, activist Torie Osborn wrote that thirty-nine gay leaders, whom she described as "our community's best and brightest," had gathered recently to discuss the state of the movement and "retool [it] to match the changing

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times." The group, she wrote, "had a collective 750 years of experience in gay rights or other political work." But even as she wrote of seeking "common ground" and "common vision" among the gay leaders, Osborn reaffirmed the linking of gay rights to "other progressive movements with which many of us identify."

In other words, she embraced the standard post-Stonewall practice of indiscriminately linking the movement for gay equal rights with any left-wing cause to which any gay leader might happen to have a personal allegiance. That practice dates back to 1969, when radical activists, gay and straight, were quick to use the gay rights movement as a way to prosecute their own unrelated revolutionary agendas. Such linkages have been a disaster for the gay rights movement; not only do they falsely imply that most gay people sympathize with those so-called progressive movements, but they also serve to reinforce the idea of homosexuality itself as a "progressive" phenomenon, as something that is essentially political in nature. Osborn wrote further that she and the other gay leaders at the summit "talked about separating strategic thinking into two discrete areas: our short-term political fights and the long-term cultural war against systematic homophobia." And she added that "we have virtually no helpful objective data or clear strategy on the long-term war, which grapples with deep-seated sexphobia as well as heterosexism." Her conclusion (my emphasis): "*We need to start working on this problem.*"

With all due respect to Osborn and her fellow gay leaders, it seems to me more than a bit astonishing that in spite of their collective 750 years of experience, at least some of them only now have begun to realize that homosexuals should be giving thought to something other than short-term political conflicts. At the same time, those leaders still can't quite understand the long-term challenge as anything other than, in Osborn's words, a "war." Nor can they see that achieving real and lasting equality is a matter not of changing right-wingers into left-wingers, or of emancipating Americans from "sexphobia," but of liberating people from their discomfort with homosexuality, their automatic tendency to think of homosexuals in terms of sex and their often bizarre notions of who gay people are, what gay people value and how gay people live.

Perhaps, at the threshold of the second generation of the post-Stonewall gay rights movement, it behooves us to recall that, as I've noted, there *was* at least some species of gay activism prior to Stonewall. Years before those patrons at the Stonewall bar hurled garbage, beer bottles, feces and four-letter words at the policemen who had come to arrest them, a few small groups of men in business suits and women in dresses staged sober, orderly marches at which they carried signs that announced their own homosexuality and that respectfully demanded an end to anti-homosexual prejudice. Those people were even more radical than the rioters at Stonewall, and—dare I say it?—perhaps even more brave, given how few they were, how premeditated their protests and how much some of them had to lose by publicly identifying themselves as gay. They were heroes, too; they won a few legal battles, and they might have won more. Sure, Stonewall was, without question, an important step—indeed, the biggest single step the gay rights movement has taken. But that's all it was: a step, the first big one in a long, difficult journey. It was a reaction to intolerance, and it set us on the road to tolerance. The next road leads to acceptance—acceptance not only of gay people by straight people, but an easier acceptance by young gay people of their own sexuality. It's a different road—and, in a way, a harder one.

First-generation post-Stonewall gay activists saw themselves as street combatants in a political war. Second generation activists would better see themselves as participants in an educational program of which the expressly political work is only a part. Getting America to accept homosexuality will first be a matter of education. The job is not to shout at straight Americans, "We're here, we're queer, get used to it." The job is to do the hard, painstaking work of *getting* straight Americans used to it. This isn't dramatic work; nor is it work that provides a quick emotional release. Rather, it requires discipline, commitment, responsibility.

In some sense, of course, most straight Americans *are* used to the idea of people being gay. The first generation of the post-Stonewall gay rights movement has accomplished that. At the same time, it has brought us to a place where many straight Americans are sick and tired of the very word "gay." They've heard it a million times, yet they don't understand it nearly well enough. They still feel uncomfortable, confused, threatened. They feel that the private lives of homosexuals have been pushed "in their faces," but they don't really *know* about those private lives.

And why should they be expected to? Yes, at Gay Pride Day marches, some gay men and lesbians, like the Stonewall rioters, have exposed America to images of raw sexuality—images that variously amuse, titillate, shock and offend while revealing nothing important about who most of those people really are. Why, then, do some people do such things? Perhaps because they've been conditioned to think that on that gay high holy day, the definitively gay thing to do is to be as defiant as those heroes twenty-five years ago. Perhaps they do it because they can more easily grasp the concept of enjoying one day per year of delicious anarchy than of devoting 365 days per year to a somewhat more disciplined and strategically sensible demonstration designed to advance the causes of respect, dignity and equality.

And perhaps they do it because, frankly, it is relatively easy to do. Just as standing up at a White House press conference and yelling at the president can take less courage than coming out to your parents or neighbors or employers, so taking off your pants or your bra for a Gay Pride Day march in the company of hundreds of thousands of known allies can be easier than taking down your defenses for a frank conversation with a

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group of colleagues at an office lunch about how it feels to grow up gay. For an insecure gay man or lesbian, moreover, explaining can feel awfully close to apologizing, and can open one up to charges of collaboration with the enemy by those who join the author Paul Monette in seeing America as the "Christian Reich" and themselves as members of the queer equivalent of the French resistance.

As a friend said to me recently, building acceptance of homosexuals is like teaching a language. When gays speak about themselves, they are speaking one language; when most straight people speak about gays, they are speaking another. Most heterosexuals look at gay lives the way I look at a page of German. I may be able to pick out a few familiar words, but I feel awkward when I use them, and if I try to put together a sentence I'm likely to find myself saying something I don't mean at all, perhaps even something offensive or hurtful. There's only one way to get past that feeling of confusion: tireless, meticulous dedication to study. You can't learn a foreign language overnight, and you can't teach it by screaming it at people. You teach it word by word, until, bit by bit, they feel comfortable speaking it and can find their way around the country where it's spoken. That's the job of the second generation of post-Stonewall gay activism: to teach those who don't accept us the language of who gay people are and where gay people live. Indeed, to the extent that professional homophobes have stalled progress in the movement toward legal and social parity for gay men and lesbians, it is not because those homophobes are so crafty, and certainly not because they are right. It is because they have spoken to straight America in its own language and addressed its concerns, whereas gay Americans, more often than not, out of an understandable fear and defensive self-righteousness, haven't.

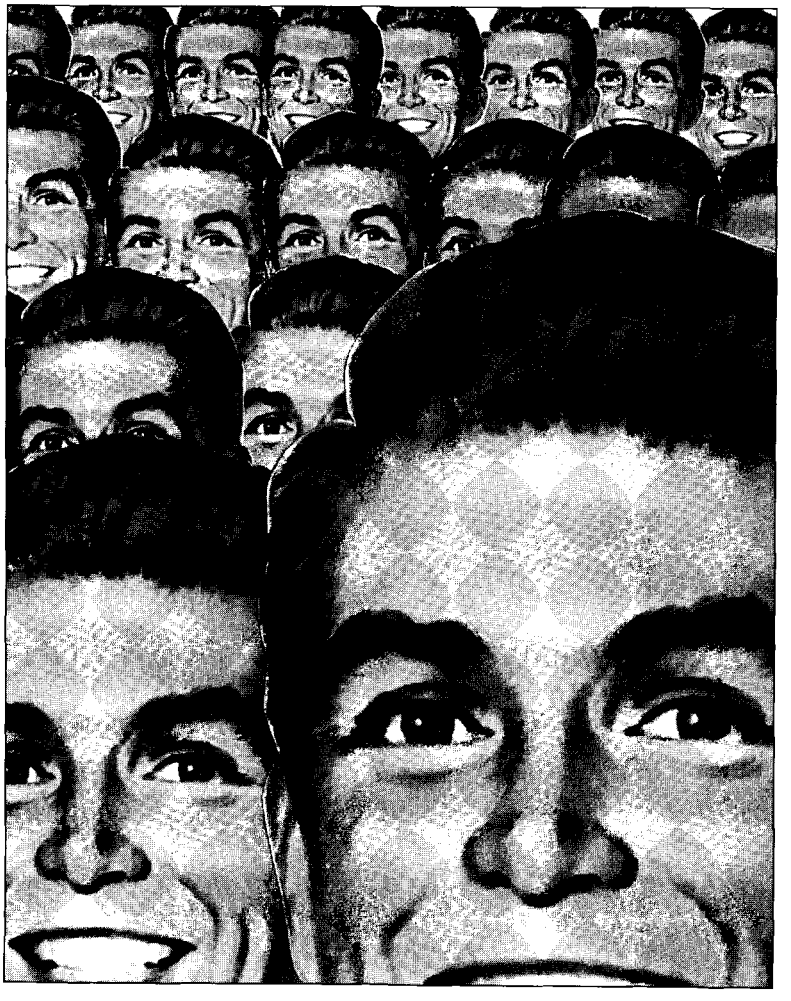

ILLUSTRATION BY CHIP KIDD FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Some reviewers in the gay press read the title of my book, *A Place at the Table: The Gay Individual in American Society*, as a sign that I, personally, long to sit at a dinner table with people like Pat Buchanan and Jerry Falwell—that this book is my attempt to indicate to them that I'm a nice, well-mannered gay man and that I, along with the other nice, well-mannered gay men, should be allowed at the table while the "bad," ill-mannered gays are excluded. Some other gay press reviewers have understood that I don't mean that at all, and that I feel everyone should be welcome at the American table, but they have angrily rejected the idea: "Why," one critic wrote, "should *I* want to sit at that table?" A writer for the gay magazine *Out* dismissed the book in one line: "Bruce Bawer has written a book about the gay individual in American society entitled *A Place at the Table.* Some will prefer take-out."

What these reactions signify to me is a powerful tendency among some homosexuals to recoil reflexively from the vision of an America where gays live as full and open members of society, with all the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of heterosexuals. Many gay people, indeed, have a deep, unarticulated fear of that metaphorical place at the table. This is understandable: gay people, as a rule, are so used to minimizing their exposure to homophobia, by living either in the closet or on the margins of society, that for someone—even a fellow gay person—to come along and invoke an image of gay America sitting openly at a table with straight America can seem, to them, like a hostile act. This sense of threat—this devotion to the margin—may help explain the gay-activist rancor toward the movie *Philadelphia.* But most gay men and lesbians were happy to see a movie that showed homosexuality as part of the mainstream, just as most are pleased by the new tendency to depict gay life, in everything from Ikea ads to movies like *Four Weddings and a Funeral,* in a matter-of-fact way, as an integrated part of society.

Am I attacking radicalism? No. I'm saying that the word "radical" must be defined anew by each generation. In the late twentieth century, when radicalism has

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Left to right: Sunil Velagapudi, Robin Watkins, Kristin Bardwell.

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often been viewed as a fashion choice, it's easy to lose sight of what real radicalism is. It's not a matter of striking a defiant pose and maintaining that pose over a period of years; it's not a matter of signing on to a certain philosophy or program and adhering to it inflexibly for the rest of your life. And it's not always a matter of manning barricades or crouching in trenches. It's a matter of honest inquiry, of waking up every morning and looking at the social circumstances in which you find yourself and having the vision to perceive what needs to be done and the courage to follow up on that vision, wherever it may take you. It's a matter of going to the *root* of the problem, wherever that root may lie.

And going to the root of this particular problem means going to the root of prejudice. It means probing the ignorance and fear that are responsible for the success of anti-gay crusaders. It means seriously addressing those opponents' arguments against gay rights, in which they combine a defense of morality and "family values" with attacks on homosexuality as anti-God, anti-American and anti-family. Too often, the first generation of the post-Stonewall gay movement has responded to such rhetoric by actually saying and doing things that have only reinforced the homophobes' characterization of homosexuality. The second generation of the movement would do well to respond not by attacking the American values and ridiculing the religious faith that these people claim as a basis for their prejudice, but by making it clear just how brutal, how un-American and how anti-religious their arguments and their prejudice are.

And there are a *lot* of untruths out there to overcome. More and more people understand that homosexuals are no more likely to be child molesters than heterosexuals are, but there remains on the part of many people a lingering discomfort about such notions, and anti-gay crusaders exploit that discomfort with ambiguous, dishonest rhetoric suggesting that homosexuals are (to quote a recent statement published in *The Wall Street Journal* by a group of religious figures calling itself the Ramsey Colloquium) a threat to the "vulnerabilities of the young." That's a lie. But how can homosexuals help heterosexuals understand it's a lie so long as some gay political leaders, in the best Stonewall tradition, feel more comfortable condemning the Log Cabin Republicans than they do condemning the North American Man-Boy Love Association?

Likewise, more and more people understand that homosexuals' lives are no more about sex than their lives are, but there are many who still *don't* understand that, and the anti-gay crusaders exploit their ignorance by saying (again in the words of the Ramsey Colloquium) that gay people "define" themselves by their "desires alone," that they seek "liberation from constraint," from obligations to the larger society and especially to the young, and from all human dignity. *That's* a lie. But how can gays help straights understand it's a lie so long as a few marchers on Gay Pride Day feel the best way to represent all gay men and lesbians is to walk down the avenue in their underwear?

Anti-gay propagandists shrewdly exploit the fact that we live in times when there's ample reason for concern about children. American children today grow up in an often uncivil and crime-ridden society, and with a pop culture that is at best value-neutral and at worst aggressive and ugly. Altogether too many of those kids grow up inured to the sight of beggars sleeping on the sidewalk, of condoms and hypodermic needles in the gutter, of pornographic magazines on display at street-corner kiosks. Anti-gay propagandists routinely link homosexuality to these phenomena, seeing homosexual orientation, and gay people's openness about it, and gay people's desire for equal rights and equal respect, as yet more signs of the decline of morals, of the family, of social cohesion and stability and of civilization generally.

One of Stonewall's legacies is that gay leaders have too often accepted this characterization of the conflict and see any attempt to correct it as "sex-negative." The second generation of post-Stonewall gay activism has to make it clear that that's not the way the sides break down at all, and that when it comes to children, the real interests of parents and of gay people (many of whom are themselves parents, of course) are not unalterably opposed, but are, in fact, perfectly congruent. Gay adults care about children, too; and they know from experience something that straight parents can only strive to understand—namely, what it's like to grow up gay.

Homosexuals, of course, are *not* a threat to the family; among the things that threaten the family are parents' profound ignorance about homosexuality and their reluctance to face the truth about it. In the second generation of the post-Stonewall gay rights movement, gay adults must view it as an obligation to ensure that parents understand that truth—and understand, too, that according equal rights to homosexuals and equal recognition to same-sex relationships (and creating an atmosphere in which gay men and lesbians can live openly without fear of losing their jobs or homes or lives) would not threaten the institution of the family but would actually strengthen millions of American families.

It is ironic that, to a large extent, what perpetuates Stonewall-style antagonism between gay and straight are not our differences, really, but traits that we all share as human beings. We all, for instance, fear the unknown. To most straight people, homosexuality is an immense unknown; to gay people, a society that would regard sexual orientation indifferently and grant homosexuals real equality is also an immense unknown. But it is also our humanity that makes most of us long to know and live with the truth, even in the wake of a lifetime of lies. The greatest tribute we can pay to the memory of Stonewall is to work in our own homes and workplaces to dismantle, lie by lie, the wall of lies that has divided the families of America for too long. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

High Thoughts and Low Dealings

Bernardo Bertolucci's new film has an odd scent about it, a whiff of pictorial opportunism. **Little Buddha** (Miramax) tells of a Seattle boy who is thought by Tibetan Buddhist monks to be the reincarnation of an important lama. For certain ceremonies, he is brought to Bhutan (where these monks have lived ever since Chinese troops occupied Tibet). Before the visit and during it, the life of Prince Siddhartha, who became the Buddha c. 523 B.C., is interwoven, gorgeously, with the modern story for the boy's instruction; and the chance to exploit the visual richness of the historical account and of Buddhist life in Bhutan today soon seems the reason for the film's existence.

I once knew a screenwriter who spent a couple of years working on a script about yacht racing. He cared little about the America's Cup, but he had seen those races in newsreels, and he labored to concoct a story around those shots as a way to use them. The film never got made because his concocting wasn't good enough. *Little Buddha*, on a rather more profound subject, did get made; but pictorial opportunism dominates as it did my friend's script.

This effect is inevitable because the screenplay, by Mark Peploe and Rudy Wurlitzer, from a Bertolucci idea, is flaccid. We're told at the start, in what is now a well-worn rubric, that the film was inspired by true stories. Possibly so; but art needs to be better managed than life. The boy, 9 years old and accompanied by his father, is taken to Bhutan, where two other possible reincarnations of the lama have been found, a slightly older girl and a slightly younger boy. All three of them go through a kind of investiture. Then the picture ends abruptly and lamely with the boy back in Seattle a year later, depositing in Puget Sound one-third of the ashes of a departed monk who befriended him. (The other two-thirds are deposited elsewhere by the other boy and the girl.) We never learn who "became" the departed lama that each child might have been.

I couldn't help wondering about the American boy's future. Schoolyard conversation: "Hey, what'd you do last summer? Go to camp?" "Nah, I was over in Bhutan, and I almost became a lama." And for the rest of his life? Telling girls? His fiancée? His children? His grandchildren? What a fate, to have peaked at 9.

Anyway, the film is, in dramatic terms, pointless, except for those camera banquets. And does Bertolucci gobble them up! He engaged James Acheson as production designer; Acheson, who designed *The Last Emperor* and *Dangerous Liaisons*, knows how to italicize history, heightening the facts of color and form without distorting them. Bertolucci's cinematographer was, once again, Vittorio Storaro, whose idea of visual reticence would be someone else's lushness. These three collaborators make every historical sequence feel like a mouthful of nougat, and the location work in Asia is like the *National Geographic* in action.

The American boy is played by Alex Wiesendanger, who is appealing and who may or may not be able to act—he's not put to any real test here except to remember what he's supposed to do in any one shot. Ying Ruocheng, a Chinese actor as the monk who seeks out and guides the boy, makes a very pleasant sage. The boy's father is Chris Isaak, the singer, who might have been any American young man of his age and type. The boy's mother is Bridget Fonda, and I wish it *had* been another American young woman of her age and type.

The real surprise, and Bertolucci's best achievement here, is the performance of Prince Siddhartha by Keanu Reeves. That is not a misprint. Reeves has done tolerable work in the past, except for his feeble Don John in *Much Ado About Nothing*, but here he carries off an extremely demanding role. Not for a moment do we doubt that he is an Indian prince of the fifth century B.C. or that he goes through a spiritual struggle to become the Buddha.

Bertolucci has given him one awkward moment. Near the start of the prince's pilgrimage, he decides to shear his long locks and starts to hack at them with his dagger. The camera cuts away for a moment, and when it returns to him, he has an ultrasmart shorter coiffure. The audience hoots, naturally—not Reeves's fault, of course. But with Bertolucci's help, he has found the center of the role. He has dignity, tenderness, poise.

In the 1960s the Swedish director Vilgot Sjöman made two films critical of Sweden, *I Am Curious–Yellow* and *I Am Curious–Blue*, yellow and blue being the colors of the Swedish flag. Lately the Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski has made three pictures, *Red*, **White** and *Blue*, following the French national colors

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Four Weddings and a Funeral. *Hugh Grant romps through those five British ceremonies, attended most of the time by Andie MacDowell. Witty* and *humorous. (Reviewed 4/4/94)* **Sunday's Children.** *Ingmar Bergman as boy and mature man, vis-à-vis his father. His subtle screenplay is touchingly directed by his son, Daniel. (5/16/94)* **A Tale of Winter.** *Eric Rohmer's customary finesse in the analysis of love. A young woman's early romance affects her later amours. (5/9/94)* **Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould.** *Perfect match of style and subject. François Girard finds thirty-two unique ways to glimpse the pianist's quirks and qualities. (4/25/94)* **—SK**

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because, overall, most of the action in the trio is set in France. (Besides, if he wanted to make three pictures, the Polish flag is one color shy—no blue.) As per French lore, *Blue* is meant to deal with liberty, *White* with equality and *Red* with fraternity. *Blue* was shown in this country last year. *Red* has its premiere at this year's Cannes Festival. *White* is now released here (by Miramax).

These films were preceded by a large reputation. Kieslowski's 1981 picture, *Blind Chance*, which I've not seen, is well-regarded by many. His *Decalogue*, a ten-part work for T.V., has been hailed rapturously, and the one part I saw at the New York Film Festival had sober, cynical, mid-European enticements. But *Blue*, made in France, about the attractive young widow of a composer, was one of the most thoroughly irritating, arty bores I've seen in years.

White is very different, much better. This time the approach is picaresque, wryly comic. A Polish hairdresser in Paris is divorced by his French wife because he is impotent, although he's still madly in love with her. She grabs their bank account. He gets himself smuggled back to Warsaw by an expert Polish bridge player who is returning after some French tourneys. In Warsaw the hairdresser finds a means to make money, goes into business for himself—not hairdressing, big business—and becomes really wealthy. He then spins a scheme for revenge on his wife, whom he still loves. The scheme brings about reunion and the end of impotence.

We have trouble sympathizing with this man's devotion to this cruel, grasping woman. Still, it doesn't seem humanly impossible. The screenplay zigs and zags every ten minutes or so with a new chapter, something like a Sacha Guitry film. Quite enjoyable. And Kieslowski's rendition of Polish life today—cleverness and swindle and financial gambóling—is fascinatingly candid.

He handles the whole film with the same mid-European cynicism that marked his earlier work, and he gets some flavorful acting from his principals. Julie Delpy is poutingly sexy as the wife. Zbigniew Zamachowski, doughy-faced, draws a Schweik-like character with a bit of ingenuity. The find of the picture is Janusz Gajos, the bridge expert, impressively taciturn, quietly sure. A sort of Polish Armin Mueller-Stahl.

Why *White* is a parable of equality I cannot see. It's blatantly a parable of vengeance. •

The Master of Motion

BY JED PERL

Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944–1994

(Whitney Museum of American Art, March 24–June 26, 1994; catalog published by Random House, 183 pp., $50)

An Autobiography by Richard Avedon

(Random House, 432 pp., $100)

The book is called *An Autobiography*. The show is called "Evidence." These are blunt, hard-edged titles, and they're very much in line with the belligerent elegance of two enormous new gatherings of work by Richard Avedon. Avedon is probably America's best-known photographer, but to call Avedon a photographer is to reduce the message to the medium in a way that fits the case as inexactly as, say, it does to call Salvador Dalí a painter. People who browse through Avedon's new book or go to see the retrospective of his work at the Whitney Museum in New York are probably not so interested in studying Avedon's photographs one by one as they are in getting in a little over their heads in what they think of as the Avedon experience.

This experience is defined but not circumscribed by the starkly efficient graphic impact of Avedon's photographs. Avedon's is a world of faces and more faces, famous and legendary faces and anonymous faces, faces alone, faces caught in a crowd. He's photographed everybody from Isak Dinesen to Barbra Streisand to an unemployed ranch hand named Clifford Feldner to Gerald Ford. To look at the work is to feel that one is being carried along by a man who has no patience with formalities or preliminar-

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ies—he's always in the thick of things, walking up to people, looking them in the eye. People may have reservations about the Avedon experience, but it's not easily forgotten. They understand that Avedon is offering them his visual equivalent of life in the fast track, and even the fainthearted want to get the feel of it.

Close to half a century ago, Avedon made a name for himself as a boy wonder of the fashion magazines who shaped the character of the photographic image in the print media, and he is now, not for the first time, the center of a media blitz. Other photographers are covered; Avedon is enveloped by coverage. He moves through an atmosphere that is supersaturated with opinion. The opinions whip around him, shine down on him, deluge him. His career kicks off sharp, conflicting emotions in members of the press, because his story is one that they know all too well, if only from their dreams. Avedon has worked for the magazines and has been hailed as an American classic. Wouldn't the writers who review him in the magazines like a little glory, too?

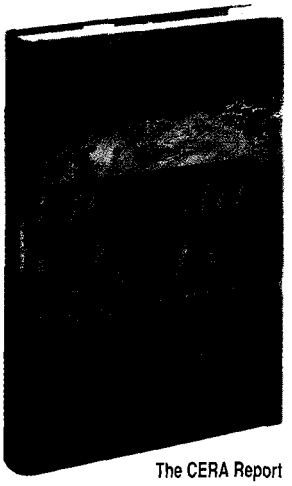
When one catches a glimpse of Avedon himself in an interview or in the photographs in the gossip columns, he looks astonishingly youthful for a man who not long ago hit 70, and his angular, ever-so-slightly-harried elegance brings to mind some of the guys who dart through the fashion photographs he took in Paris in the '50s and early '60s. Those were the nattily dressed fellows who escorted the models, helping them duck the paparazzi, or taking them roller skating through the Place de la Concorde. In some of those photographs the man accompanying Suzy Parker is Mike Nichols, the half of the Nichols and May comedy team who was then in the early stages of his solo career as a director. The blond Nichols could be a stand-in for the dark Avedon; these good-looking, incredibly bright young men have a knack for finding themselves in the thick of things. Avedon is so much a protagonist in the world that he photographs that he's become the model for several movie heroes. The photographer in the 1956 movie *Funny Face*, played by Fred Astaire, was based on Avedon (down to the name: Dick Avery), and Avedon was a visual consultant on the film.

Avedon has, without ever giving up commercial work, published books with texts by Truman Capote and James Baldwin, chronicled the political scene, had a show of his fashion photographs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, become the first staff photographer at *The New Yorker* and now mounted a full retrospective of his work at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Even allowing for the expectations of a man with an Avedon-sized ego, he's probably achieved a lot of what he set out to achieve. Avedon has had a good deal to do with convincing a broad, literate public that it inhabits a cultural atmosphere that's a powerful mixture of elements drawn from the worlds of art, literature, politics and fashion. For decades he's been the photographer of choice whenever new artists and writers and entertainers are brought before the court of public opinion. He's been an advocate for high culture and for the counterculture. And his images are sometimes most convincing when they startle the public, when they have a prosecutorial sting. It's probably safe to say that so long as people believe that there's a cultural gestalt, they'll believe in Avedon.

A visitor to the Whitney show may feel that it includes everything: artists and actors and actresses, writers, politicians, fashion, the man in the street, mad houses, the ravages of war. Avedon obviously loves all the juxtapositions—perpetual motion and even perpetual irresolution are key to his career. As a journalist who's been accepted as an artist, he understands that when crossing over is your greatest act, the crossover can—must—never quite be complete. The earliest Avedon icons are elegantly

"Read the book, cross your fingers, and hope for the best."

—Peter Galuszka, BUSINESS WEEK



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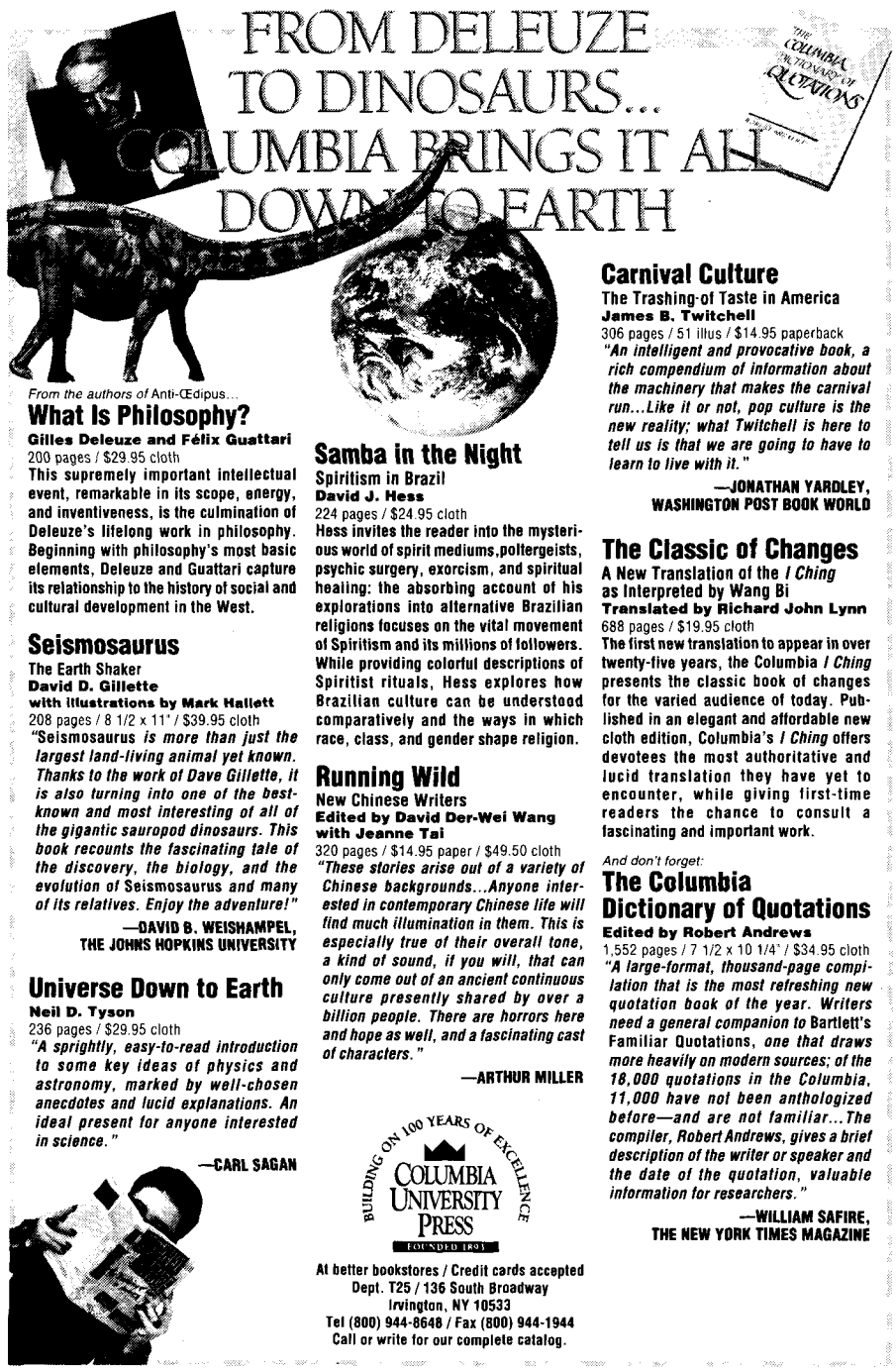
dressed women caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. We see them all decked out in Dior or Lanvin, making surprise appearances in the corner café or the late-night brasserie or backstage at the circus. Avedon loves these high-meets-low juxtapositions, and he's still juxtaposing things thirty or forty years later. He likes to show the ugly side of the beautiful people, he likes to photograph unsavory outsiders in such a way that they look strikingly exotic.

For Avedon, who always wants to confound expectations, a retrospective cannot be a summing up. That's why the Whitney show has been designed as a dramatically orchestrated sequence of differently sized images that takes visitors by the sleeve, shakes them up, tells them that Avedon is still on the move. Probably there is no other kind of exhibition that Avedon can countenance. As for the new book, *An Autobiography* covers much of the same terrain. And it is also not quite a summing up. Avedon's publisher has been eager to let the public know that this is only the first in a series of ten books for which Avedon is currently under contract. The Whitney catalogue, *Evidence: 1944-1994*, is No. 2.

Avedon's sharp focus is sharper than anything we know, no matter how hard we look at things. His out-of-focus is blurrier than anything we see, no matter how quickly we look at things. He's always the active party, always pushing in closer, faster. Great photographers often approach their subjects with a kind of watchfulness and even a kind of intent passivity. In a photograph by Henri Cartier-Bresson, for example, one is of course initially struck by the photographer's genius for unearthing startling juxtapositions within quotidian scenes, but ultimately one's thoughts are fixed less on the photographer's imagination than on the corner of the world to which he has acted as a guide. Photography is a medium that gives us the powerful impression that the artist is acting transparently. Avedon works against this illusion. He likes to create a sort of photographic guerrilla theater by dramatizing over and over again the fact that the transparency of the camera is nothing but an illusion. He photographs the real world and makes it look startlingly unreal. He twists appearances into a sometimes all-too-apt expression of the zeitgeist. No other photographer produced so many unsettlingly definitive impressions of the 1960s, a decade when guerrilla theater became mainstream theater and the unexpected turned out to be what everybody expected.

Understatement, the photographer's ultimate stealth weapon, is not in Avedon's arsenal. When he shoots, he means to leave his mark. He doesn't want to uncover the hidden implications of a face so much as he wants to get an angle on a face, to stylize a face. All photography involves a heightening of reality, but with Avedon the heightening is so persistent that it tends to turn hyperbole into normality. That's what he's doing in some of his worst photographs; but it's also what he does when he's at his best, as in the double portrait of Vicomtesse Jacqueline de Ribes and Raymundo de Larrain, taken in New York in 1961. Avedon photographs these two figures of the beau monde in profile, silhouetted against one of his signature white backdrops, so that he can take the full measure of their aquiline noses, beautifully shaped heads and breathtakingly elegant evening dress. They're like two stunning, perfectly groomed exotic birds, conversing but not quite looking at each other, and we can't take our eyes off them. Here old-world elegance suddenly looks refreshed and astonishingly sexy. It's Proust meets mod fashion: these two are the pop stars of the Guermantes Way.

Jane Livingston, who organized the Whitney show and has already written about Avedon at some length in an earlier book on what she dubbed the New York School photographers, is attuned to Avedon's more-than-photographer sta-



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tus. I think she is correct in not feeling constrained to describe Avedon's education as an artist strictly in terms of formal relationships with earlier or contemporary photographers. If she's not quite willing to admit that his work is often so graphic that it's anti-photographic, she may still be thinking something along these lines when she emphasizes his debt to Alexey Brodovitch. Brodovitch—with whom Avedon studied at The New School and worked at *Harper's Bazaar*, where Brodovitch was the art director—was a sometime photographer but is mostly remembered and prized as a graphic designer. What Avedon learned from Brodovitch was to see the photograph as a dynamic element in a constructivist design, to see it not so much as a realistic image but as a symbolic element. For Brodovitch, photography wasn't a way of capturing reality so much as a way of abstracting reality; and Avedon, following Brodovitch's lead, uses both his extremely blurry images and his exaggeratedly sharp contrasts as ways to abstract, to metamorphose.

It's also from Brodovitch that Avedon apparently picked up the constructivist idea that the ultimate meaning of a photograph is not in the photograph itself, but in the relationship to a surrounding space, to a text, to other images. The self-consciousness of this constructivist attitude is most evident—annoyingly so, I think—in the way that Avedon insists on including the edges of the negative stock in his finished prints. In the Whitney show we're constantly being reminded by those black borders with their numbers and letters that a picture was selected from a contact sheet and printed in a darkroom.

Although there is a casual look about Avedon's work that owes a lot to the intuitive aesthetic of Brassai and Kertész and Cartier-Bresson, nobody has ever insisted quite so much on transforming intuition into orchestration, direction, design. Avedon has obviously given considerable thought to the orchestration of images in photographic books such as Cartier-Bresson's *Decisive Moment*, but none of the Europeans has produced a photographic book that has anything like the theatrical plotting of the volumes that have come off the presses bearing Avedon's name.

In his first book, the 1959 *Observations*, the leaps in scale and the arrangements of photographs amid wide open white spaces convey the sense of a reeling, spinning modern world. The individual portraits are sometimes little more than hip-slick magazine work, but the layout (by Brodovitch) is so animated that Avedon achieves the kinetic quality of an impossibly glamorous pop-up book. Nearly thirty-five years later, in the new *Autobiography*, some of the same photographs that are in *Observations* reappear, but there is no white in sight, and the theatrical extravagance has heated up into a crazily baroque mood. I don't exactly take to the grand-opera scale of *An Autobiography*, but this is a hell of a piece of work. Avedon has left nothing to chance.

The thumpingly impressive presentation begins with the cover, in a thick-woven brown cloth, printed with bold sans serif letters in several orangish and purplish reds. It's a striking effect. Avedon's brief introduction, in which he outlines the three kinds of illusions that have been crucial in his life—laughter, power and the loss of all illusions—is metaphysical hooey. But when you start to turn the pages, full of laughing, leaping, dancing figures, you're in the hands of somebody who knows how to set a mood of hallucinogenic, manic elegance. The sheer size of this volume and the beauty of the printing give the book a vehemence that is not quite like anything else, but it is also not especially likable. Avedon overplays his overwhelmed-by-life angle.

Courtesy of Richard Avedon

PORTRAIT OF VICOMTESSE JACQUELINE DE RIBES AND RAYMUNDO DE LARRAIN (1961)

The essential—and essentially constructivist—image of *An Autobiography* is a double-page spread with two unrelated portraits juxtaposed so that they make striking comments on one another. A double page with an Avedon self-portrait on one side and a photograph of Marilyn Monroe on the other tells us exactly how attractive the photographer believes himself to be, and maybe he's not far from wrong; yet by shoving the comparison in our faces he pleads his case in a way that feels unseemly. In most of Avedon's photographs his subjects look us straight in the eye; but the key drama of *An Autobiography*—and it is a subversive drama, because the portrait subjects have no choice in the matter—has to do with whom they've been stuck next to, with the neighbors that Avedon has foisted on them.

Monroe may be the neighbor Avedon wants, but she becomes his pawn. So far as what Henry Kissinger, buttoned up in his dark suit, might feel about being set next to Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky, who are arm in arm in the nude, I guess we can assume that it would make him squirm. Perhaps Avedon's point about the beatniks and the diplomat is that they are equal in their unequal dress. Perhaps he sees a connection between Ginsberg's and Kissinger's dark, slightly evasive eyes. Certainly Ginsberg and Kissinger are both public figures who can take care of themselves. This is an unnerving juxtaposition, but there is a sense in which public life is the sum of many such unnerving encounters, so

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that Avedon's double-page spread turns out to be a catchy layout with an authentic emotional sting. On the next double page, however, where Nelson Rockefeller is juxtaposed with the fashion model Simone, the effect is silly and artificial. The connection here is a trite, formal one: the slit shape of Rockefeller's eyes seen through his glasses echoes the wackily shaped slits in the big sunglasses that the model is wearing. Avedon's *Autobiography* is probably supposed to be about reflecting on all the interconnections that run through one life, but a lot of the connections that he presents feel creepy or trumped-up. Avedon puts in too much and pushes much too hard. The rhythms diffuse. A viewer loses patience.

A lot of well-known people look less than wonderful in *An Autobiography*, but then the warts-and-all treatment is what we expect from Avedon's portrait work. People often wonder what this legendary photographer has in mind when he shows a person's least attractive side; one can also wonder what the sitters have in mind in letting him have his way in the first place. Although Cecil Beaton is too flatteringly old-fashioned a portrait photographer to suit many modern tastes, I don't think he was wrong to observe of Avedon's photographs of Somerset Maugham and Coco Chanel that those sitters "would never have agreed to the drainpipes in their throats becoming their salient features." Janet Malcolm, in a 1978 review of Avedon's show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, observed how in some 1961 photographs of models standing amidst the personnel of the House of Dior and the French press corps, the people who make up the small crowd surrounding the model are "of unvarying unattractiveness—fatness or scrawniness, slack-jawed dullness, pitiful agedness." Avedon, she goes on, "has, of course, created them with his pitilessly scrutinizing strobe lights and mole-into-mountain-making big camera." A little later she jokingly wonders that "people didn't sue."

Of the many well-known people whom Avedon has photographed for *The New Yorker* since becoming the magazine's first staff photographer in 1992, Steve Martin strikes me as the subject with whom Avedon has had the most success. The Martin photographs do something more than demonstrate Avedon's ability to remake anybody as an Avedon; they catch the wit and fluidity of Martin's movie persona. In a lot of Avedon's portraits the black edges of the images press in on the subject, so that there seems to be no space in which a person can move or even breathe. The men and women in Avedon's photographs often look like

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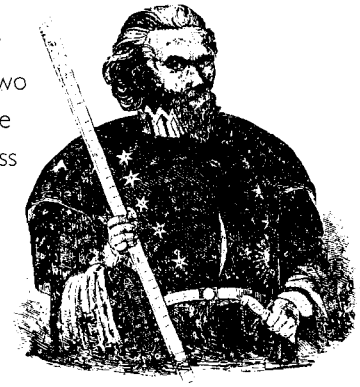

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specimens that have been pinned down, glassed in. (Maybe Avedon hasn't put the photographs in the Whitney show under glass because he feels that he's glassed-in his subjects already.) What's inspiriting about the Martin photographs is that the actor retains his freedom. The camera doesn't press in so hard, there's more light and air in these photographs, there's a space in which a man can take up residence, move around. The result is an increase in photographic drama. Martin's dark jacket, silhouetted against Avedon's white ground, creates an animated, asymmetrical shape. The sharp lighting—with dark shadows working their chiaroscuro drama—gives point to each flicker of an eyelid, each twist of a finger. Here Avedon's theatrical sense is attuned to his subject's theatricality, and the photographs become small essays in a mesmerizing contemporary comic style. The photographs are pure Steve Martin, but they're pure Avedon, too. Avedon's dramatic weight somehow underlines Martin's dramatic lightness. This is great celebrity photography.

The New Yorker apparently liked these photographs quite a lot. They used not one but a group of them, so that the magazine's readers had a sense of a little Steve Martin dance being performed before Avedon's camera. Avedon, however, does not think that the playful, upbeat allure of these photographs represents his work at its best. Not too long after they were published last November, Avedon remarked in an interview that these shots "are not pure expressions of myself." Martin, Avedon explained, "was enormously generous in the sitting, but there's no such thing as cutting through to Steve Martin. Steve Martin uses his comic genius like a wall. There's no penetrating it, and I respect that." Fair enough. But the line of argument leaves one wondering if what Avedon regards as penetration is not what some others regard as violation. That violation is apparently Avedon's way of expressing, over and over again, his centrality in the photographic process.

Avedon's observations suggest a paradox. Why would a portrait photographer even want his portraits of others to be a "pure expression of myself"? Did Avedon mean to prove his power over Coco Chanel by showing her as all "drainpipe"? Or, as Truman Capote asserts in the text for *Observations*, did Avedon reveal "the striving in the taut stem of her neck"? It's hard to tell. Avedon himself has said that the portraits are about "contradictions, dialogue, arguments. The soul's confusion on the face." This is his way of saying that there is elegance and there is embarrassment, the mask and the unmasking, and both are presented with the same intensity.

Avedon wants us to see his intensity as insatiable curiosity, but couldn't it also be self-absorption? Like many people who have achieved a great deal in the world, Avedon may believe that so far as people are concerned there are only three groups: his famous friends, the supporting staff and the relatives. At times he has wanted to chronicle a cross-section of the nation, but he's just too much of a big shot to confront Everyman with the openness of a photographer like August Sander, whose project of documenting all the German social types of the years between the wars may have inspired some of Avedon's work. Although Avedon went to considerable trouble to photograph another kind of American for his 1985 book, *In the American West*, he gives us no deep insights into the lives of people whom he obviously can't help but regard as life's bit-players. He can do a good job of presenting their oddities or their terrific features, but there is no way on earth that a cowboy can level with Avedon or that Avedon can level with a cowboy.

Avedon does better in some photographs in the Whitney exhibition in which the somebodies rub shoulders not exactly with the nobodies but with the people who are only somebody because they know somebody. This is a dynamic with which a man of Avedon's eminence is obviously quite familiar. In one mural-size photograph Avedon shows us Andy Warhol and the crowd at The Factory, and he holds nothing back so far as telling us who's who in Warhol Land. There are the people who have the wit to invent themselves and then there are the ones who have nothing but their good looks to keep them going. There's a pecking order about which Avedon is brutally frank (although most of the brutality is probably Warhol's). It's really very simple: the less important you are the more you must take off. As for the relatives in Avedon's world, some of them are presented as comic relief, such as Ginsberg's mildly buffoonish aunts and uncles. Or they are presented in a tragic light, as is the case in Avedon's photographs of his father during the last years of the old man's life, when he was in failing health.

The photographs of Avedon's father, Jacob Israel Avedon, have received a considerable amount of attention since they were shown at the Museum of Modern Art in 1974. Here Avedon deals with the most personal subject imaginable, a subject that is not only biographical but also autobiographical, since the specter of a parent's death immediately raises the specter of one's own mortality. The photographs touch on ultimate emotions, and Avedon shows us something unusual in photography, namely, the way that a person who is approaching death can appear both implacable and ethereal. These photographs would not have their strange, voyeuristic power if Avedon had not been willing to train his confrontational camera on his own father, yet one is left wondering if Avedon is using nakedness as a subterfuge. The dying man's situation is presented as a lesson for the living, so that Avedon's nearest and dearest becomes an allegorical figure. Isn't that a form of denial? Avedon casts a cool, silvery sheen over life-and-death matters.

At the Whitney a small room devoted to Avedon's father comes just before the close of the show, and it's a quiet, almost chapel-like space separated from the general press of events. It does little, however, to slow down the forward rush of the show, which in this case, as in Avedon's 1978 Metropolitan Museum show, is toward larger and larger images. It's not hard to understand the motivation behind this arrangement. Avedon quite rightly believes that an extensive exhibition composed of relatively small photographs is not a particularly inviting experience for a museumgoer. At the Whitney Avedon organizes his photographs into rooms and series of rooms, using a film editor's sense of montage and an instinct for bold compositions that echoes the scale of postwar American painting. The show, with unframed photographs hanging casually on the walls, has a flair that one knows from the installations in the SoHo galleries; long before SoHo was SoHo, Avedon had something to do with inventing this look. But there are few younger artists who could get away with some of the juxtapositions that Avedon presents at the Whitney, where one goes from a room of fashion photographs to a room where photographs of patients in a hospital for the insane are adjacent to photographs of the ravaged faces of napalm victims. At the Whitney a museumgoer can take in a napalm victim and a fashion model almost simultaneously; the juxtaposition is not accidental, it also occurs in *An Autobiography*. If one cares to give Avedon the benefit of the doubt, one can say that this juxtaposition is his way of demonstrating the range of his experience—all the way from Swingin' London to war-torn Nam. But the experience of seeing a person's face nearly totally disfigured by napalm is not something that Avedon has any business fitting into his personal grand design.

After the images of war victims there is

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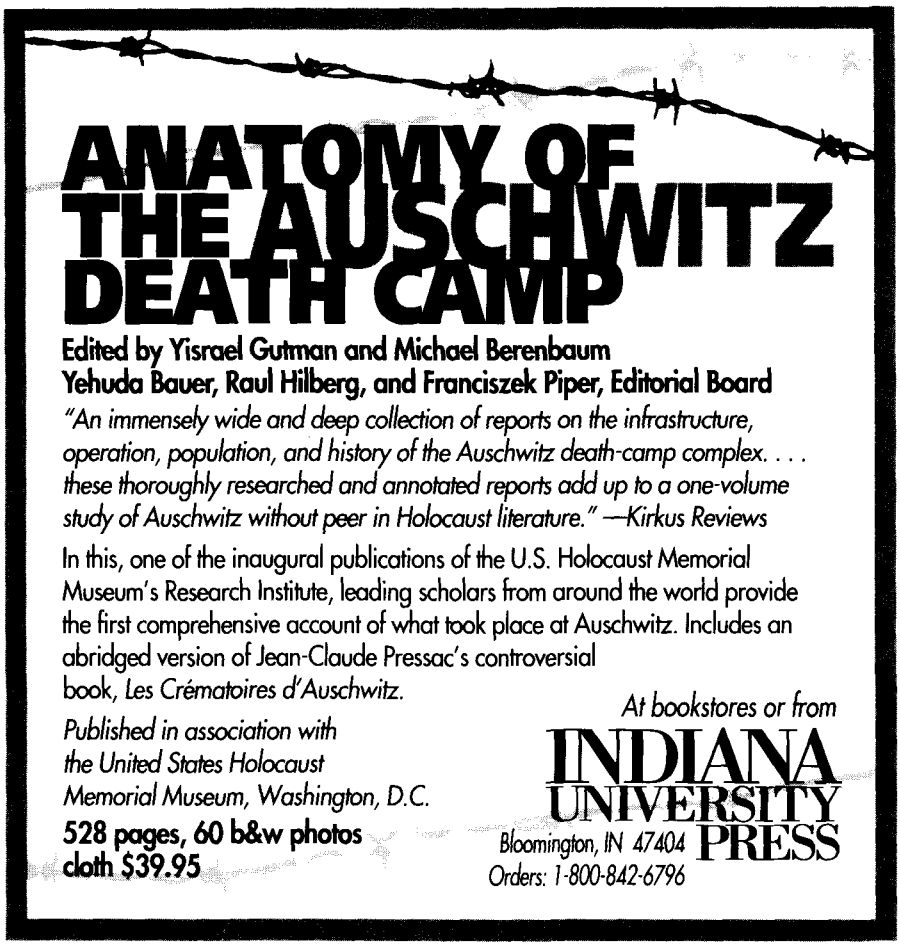
a room in which Avedon has gathered together portraits of some artists and writers whom he obviously regards as masters of an ascetic yet luxurious modern mode—among them are Igor Stravinsky, Samuel Beckett, Jorge Luis Borges, Francis Bacon and Michelangelo Antonioni. Here we see Bacon twice, Stravinsky thrice, the effect being of a little visit with a person, a succession of moments. The Stravinsky has a creepy fascination: Avedon bears in on the old man, Stravinsky shoots back a look that is almost defiant, and we cheer the composer. Avedon gives a very flattering portrait of Beckett; the grand old guy with the beautiful stand-up hair has a casually severe demeanor that is positively chic. Bacon is also rather elegant in his black turtleneck sweater. And Antonioni—the director of *Blow Up*, a movie with an Avedonish photographer-hero—looks peaceful and refined. Whether or not Antonioni had Avedon in mind when he directed *Blow Up* in the '60s, Avedon clearly identifies with Antonioni. If Avedon's comments to an interviewer can be believed, he can hardly tell the two of them apart. "One of the great Avedon faces," Avedon explained, "is Michelangelo Antonioni's. There are artists just as complicated as Antonioni, but their complexity isn't available to my camera." By gathering together portraits of Antonioni and other eminent artists and writers who've had a part in defining the severity and anti-realism of the modern imagination, Avedon is creating his preferred cultural atmosphere, the one in which he'd like us to judge all his parched, white-background photographs. Yet Avedon doesn't linger too long on this idea of monastic modernism. After all, he isn't ready to retreat from the world, and in the next and last room of the show he's deep into something else.

The grand finale of "Evidence" is not a room full of discrete photographs but an installation in which big, dark, packed images add up to a Götterdämmerung of photomontage. Hung at various heights in the squarish space are the near-mob scenes that represent some of Avedon's most recent assessments of life, high and otherwise. High life is the Volpi Ball, a gathering of aristocrats in Venice that Avedon went to photograph in August 1991. The rough-and-tumble side of life is represented by the celebrations of a changing Europe at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin on New Year's Eve, 1989. The dates are important. Like the captions recording the date and place where a photograph was taken that run with Avedon's weekly *New Yorker* installments, they turn the images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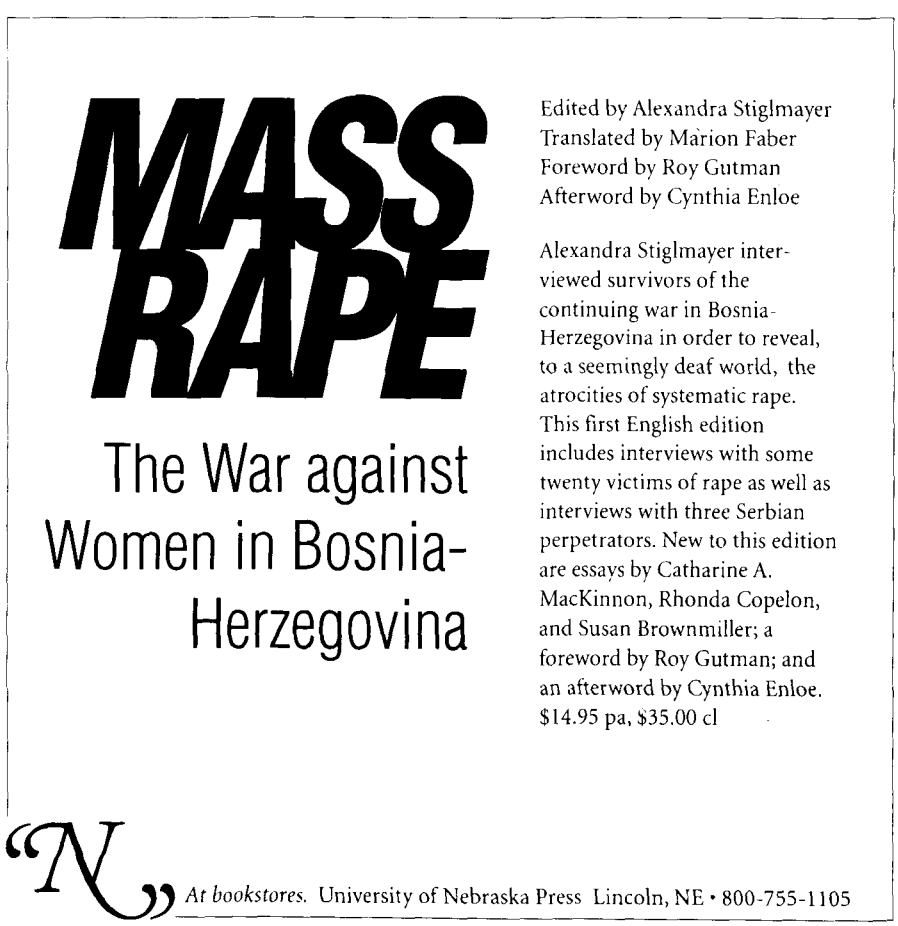
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into a public diary, the logbook of a busy life. After the quiet, Beckettish moments with mentors and his father, this is Avedon's Cecil B. DeMille finale. He pulls out all the stops.

These crowded photographs, which have the harum-scarum informality of snapshots, were actually montaged together in the darkroom, no doubt to heighten the layered, pushing, shoving movements. An important old Avedon theme, the crossover, is the guiding motif in this big-scaled room. The photographer who has spent his life charting his own and other people's crossovers from fashion into art and back cannot be immune to the fascination of Berlin, the ultimate crossover city, where East and West, Communist and capitalist, now intermingle. In these photographs from the past five years everything has become impossibly muddled; people don't seem to know if they're on the way up or on the way down. The aristocrats are wandering aimlessly. They look as confused as the kids whooping it up in Berlin. Avedon is reaching for fervor and exhilaration, but he is certainly not unaware that the result of all the hoopla is something more like stunned exhaustion. He's made this trip to where-it's-at many times before; maybe he suspects that he's made it too many times before. At the end of the Whitney show the whole world has turned into one bedraggled miserable army: they're the veterans of the new. Avedon, darting through the crowds with his cameras and his assistants, is a veteran reporter working against the clock. He can't stop. If he stops he'll vanish.

JED PERL's most recent book is *Gallery Going: Four Seasons in the Art World* (Harcourt Brace). He is at work on *New Art City*, a study of art in Manhattan between 1950 and 1970.

The Voyage In

BY CARYL PHILLIPS

A Way in the World by V.S. Naipaul

(Knopf, 380 pp., $23)

> What is the point in worrying oneself too much about what one could or could not have done to control the course one's life took? Surely it is enough that the likes of you and I at least *try* to make our small contribution count for something true and worthy. And if some of us are prepared to sacrifice much in life in order to pursue such aspirations, surely that is in itself, whatever the outcome, cause for pride and contentment.
>
> —*The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro

That writers have a huge capacity to dwell, somewhat self-indulgently, upon the price paid for success in their vocation will come as little surprise to most. From Rilke's assertion that one must look "in the deepest places of your heart, [and] acknowledge to yourself whether you would have to die if it were denied you to write," by way of Faulkner's declaration that he would kill—a grandparent if necessary—in order to write, through to Mailer's unashamedly pugilistic metaphors for prosodic composition, one is left in no doubt that writing is not for the fainthearted.

V. S. Naipaul has long been a proponent of this philosophy of the writer as vocational victim. Yet Naipaul has not been so much concerned with letting us know what he will do in order to write; it is what he has done to himself—what he has given up over the years—that he has seemed inordinately keen for us to acknowledge. He has long sponsored the myth of himself as a man who has spurned any sense of place or community in order to pursue his global peregrinations and deliver judgments in legendary, unforgiving prose. Moreover, the region of the heart is a place that Naipaul, more than any writer of his generation, has seemed determined to avoid. In fact, until he published *Finding the Center* in 1984, it was a place of which Naipaul—*A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961) apart—seemed ignorant, the inference being that to submit to any emotion or passion might deflect him from his demanding, all-consuming career as a writer. Now, in his autumnal years, Naipaul appears to be slowly undertaking his most difficult journey, as he travels across the landscape of his life toward this one elusive zone.

Naipaul's decade-long desire to locate the heart appears to have been born out of his growing sense of mortality. *A Way in the World*, his twelfth work of fiction (and twenty-second book), continues this process of "revisionism" and inches him one step closer to a true "confession" of his yearnings and his needs. In its deeply moving climax the novel seems to suggest that even Naipaul now realizes that to give up everything to be a writer, particularly the generosity of spirit that allows one to tolerate the foolishness often to be found in one's fellow man, is to commit an act of great folly. To adopt a heartless position—one that has little concern for people beyond ridiculing their sad manifestations of self-delusory grandeur, one that seemingly relishes the exposition of man's essential fragility, one that ceaselessly mocks man's capacity to dare and dream—is to pour scorn on oneself as son, brother, father, husband. Such a position undermines the elemental bonds that unite us one to the other and ultimately, if one is a writer, damages one's capacity to write fiction or nonfiction.

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born in Chaguanas, in central Trinidad, in 1932, the grandson of East Indians who migrated to nineteenth-century Trinidad in order that they might find work as indentured laborers. They were, however, untypical of the average Indian migrant, in that they were, on both sides, Brahmans, high-caste Indians who, by the very act of migration, defiled themselves and lost caste. Naipaul's family (the maternal side of which provided a model for the Tulsi family in *A House for Mr. Biswas*) fought a vigorous, but inevitably losing, battle to maintain some form of "purity" in the face of the creolizing ways of the Caribbean. Sadly, the truth was they were lost. To return to India was economically impossible and, even if they found some way to do so, regaining caste status there would involve complex purification rituals. There was no choice but to make the best of it and remain in Trinidad, a "no man's land," a colonial milieu of second-rate Europeans and former Negro slaves.

As a child born into this world, Naipaul desired only to leave it, and as soon as possible. In 1950, at the age of 18, he won a scholarship to study at Oxford University; he later described this departure as having been "saved" from "extinction." No longer West Indian East Indian or East Indian West Indian, in England he could begin to remake himself as something new. Not, however, as an Englishman: as a "double" migrant, he knew better than to try to remodel himself as a man tainted with the transitory, unreliable connotations of nationality. There would be no fealty to place, to personal history, to

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family, to people. Vidiadhar Surajprasad, soon to become the more anonymous V. S., would remake himself as a writer, unburdened by responsibility to anything beyond the word and himself.

The literary career that Naipaul began, post-Oxford, has been outstanding, there being hardly a literary prize that he has not collected. His books are published in uniform editions, they are widely translated and he travels the world giving lectures and receiving awards and honorary degrees. Still, his has been a controversial career, not because of the quality of his output, but because of the nature of his commentary on the people of the developing or Third World—in other words, his own people. It has often appeared as though, in order to distinguish himself as separate and apart, Naipaul has decided to be hypercritical of, and at times extraordinarily insensitive to, the human condition as it appears in what he would term less civilized parts of the world than the West, including, of course, his native Trinidad. As long ago as August 1958, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Naipaul contemptuously dismissed Trinidad: "Superficially, because of the multitude of races, Trinidad may seem complex, but to anyone who knows it, it is a simple, colonial, philistine society." In July 1961, in the London *Times*, he spoke of Trinidad as "a very small, unimportant island, where no building was 150 years old, and where the weather never varied."

The sardonic, often bitter tone was established early in Naipaul's career. The subsequent years have been peppered with a litany of depressingly familiar transgressions in both his work and in his public utterances. One of his most controversial interviews was with *The New York Times* in 1980. Referring to his Asian readers, Naipaul claimed that they "do not read ... if they read at all, they read for magic." Of the African, he said, "I don't count the African readership and I don't think one should. Africa is a land of bush, again, not a very literary land." He went on to speak of Trinidad:

> I can't be interested in people who don't like what I write, because if you don't like what I write, you're disliking me.... I can't see a Monkey—you can use a capital M, that's an affectionate word for the generality—reading my work. No, my books aren't read in Trinidad now—drum-beating is a higher activity, a more satisfying activity.... I do not have the tenderness more secure people can have towards bush people.... I *feel threatened by them. My attitude* and the attitude of people like me is quite different from people who live outside the bush or who just go camping in the bush on weekends.... These people [Trinidadians] live purely physical lives which I find contemptible.... It makes them interesting only to chaps in universities who want to do compassionate studies about brutes.

Naipaul first came to literary attention in the late 1950s and early '60s, as part of a group of writers from the Caribbean who relocated themselves in England. Alongside him were such novelists as George Lamming, Edgar Mittelholzer, Sam Selvon, Andrew Salkey and Jan Carew. Naipaul, however, differed from his colleagues in his unequivocally expressed desire to put his Caribbean past behind him, to escape from what he perceived to be colonial oblivion. Unlike other Caribbean writers, or African writers such as Achebe, Soyinka and Sembene—writers who, at this historical stage, were inspired by the ambition to give a new voice to their people's history, to create a modern literature for their respective countries, to re-examine the whole legacy of a colonial past—Naipaul wanted nothing whatsoever to do with such "political" writing. From the onset, he consciously wrote in an oppositional tradition to these other "commonwealth," or as they later came to be known, "postcolonial" writers. For him neither Africa, nor the Caribbean, nor for that matter India, was a viable world in which to pursue a writing career. The only set of cultural values that possessed any validity were those of the West. In a radio interview in New Zealand in 1972, he explained his feelings as follows:

> Coming from a place like Trinidad, which I always felt existed on the edge of the world, far away from everything else, not only physically but also in terms of culture, I felt I had to try very hard to rejoin the world. So I had this great drive to achievement.

Naipaul's early work, up until *A House for Mr. Biswas*, can be seen as a critical exploration of Trinidad. After this novel Naipaul's misanthropy emerges as he builds a wall of self-regard between himself and the people that produced him. At this juncture, the form of the novel seems to fail him as his vision becomes smaller and soured. People begin to irritate him with their foolishness, and with their adherence to old and irrational beliefs. But novels are about people, and if the novelist believes in nothing else, if he has no political fealty, or national drum to beat, he must care for people. Naipaul's sense of his own Trinidadian history having marked him out as inferior, having failed him before he even *had a chance* to begin, caused him to spurn the Caribbean, and to begin his global wanderings. But such alienation,

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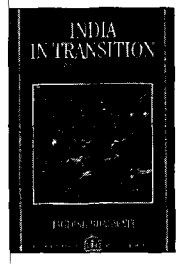

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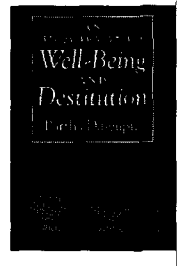

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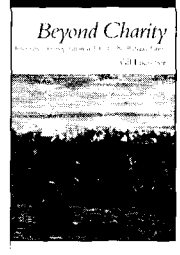

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such despair as he carried with him, never dried like mud on his boots, so that he might kick it clear and travel lightly and with joy. His trudging became, over the years, more ponderous, his fictions more labored, more caustic and impatient.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Naipaul increasingly equated Western Experience with Universal Experience, and when he examined Third World societies he rendered judgments that made it clear that he saw those places only in terms of mimicry and barbarity. His became a dark vision, particularly in *Guerrillas* (1975) and *A Bend in the River* (1979), novels set in postcolonial Trinidad and Central Africa that stubbornly refused to engage with the complex issue of what created these societies in the first place. These "Conradian" novels do not provide any sense of redemption, or just plain hope, beyond the colonial phase. We lurch from doom to despair as Naipaul denies the evidence of continued resistance and struggle against tyrannies, some of which grow like a cancer within the bellies of developing societies, some of which are imposed from outside.

This undisguised contempt for the people of the Third World has been the most problematic aspect of his career. He has fired off volley after volley of disaffected bulletins, in fictional and nonfictional forms, from what he terms "half-made societies," places the West has abandoned or "dark" regions of the globe it has simply chosen to ridicule or ignore. Naipaul, the chronicler of "primitive" societies, is highly conscious of his position in the tradition of delivering "truths" about heathens, a position that follows in the footsteps of Trollope, Conrad and Graham Greene. Naipaul's castigation of these "barbaric" non-Western societies, where neocolonial elites merely ape the West, where the "resistance" of the masses is to be understood only as "resentment," has gone unchallenged by the West, in large part due to his presentation of himself as a man with colonial connections of his own, despite his obvious distaste for and impatience with any cultural value that is non-Western.

Through it all, Naipaul has appeared thoroughly oblivious to the disparaging response from Third World critics who have come to view him as merely a Eurocentric foreign correspondent for the West. He has ignored their criticism and continued to emphasize anti-intellectualism among the "other," deep-set primitivism, social malaise, filth, crime—all the inevitable conclusions of these people having had the temerity to reject the civilizing presence of a colonial master. Naipaul's only concern seems to have been to plough his own path as a deliverer of veracities that he, in his unique position as a part of both worlds, is duty-bound to deliver. Such writings fly in the face of the tradition of the Empire writing back, a tradition that dates back to the 1950s. It is against this tradition of African, Caribbean and Indian writing that Naipaul so consciously works, for he has been reluctant to see any ills in the Third World that could be intimately connected with European "barbarity."

With *Guerrillas* and *A Bend in the River*, Naipaul left his Caribbean contemporaries far behind in terms of the critical praise that was heaped upon him. He had achieved his aim of making it clear that he was not one of "these commonwealth writers who specialize in stories of local color." His nonfictional works of this period, *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1971), *The Return of Eva Perón with The Killings in Trinidad* (1975) and *Among the Believers* (1981), are informed by Naipaul's growing intolerance for the "bush." By the time he is traveling in the Middle and Far East for *Among the Believers*, it is clear that he has undisguised contempt for worlds that do not accord with his own view of civilization. He travels with a permanent scowl, for the world is no longer a mystery. To define himself is all that remains, and he can do it without this tedious journeying. The most recent years of his writing career, beginning with *Finding the Center*, have been dominated by this preoccupation with self. He has continually explained and re-explained his colonial predicament, continually dwelt upon his "lamentable condition" and while doing so has shown less contempt for, or perhaps just less interest in, those poor deluded souls who continue to inhabit the uncivilized world. The truth is, he has come to the conclusion that he has no uncertainties about the world, only about himself.

In 1987 Naipaul published an autobiographical novel titled, appropriately enough, *The Enigma of Arrival*. The place he had arrived in was a small Wiltshire village. Shortly after the publication of this novel, he was knighted. How far he had come since those early days with Lamming, Carew, Selvon and their like in the London of the 1950s. The wound that Naipaul perceived the Caribbean to have inflicted upon him had been, to some extent, healed by a generous Britain. Still, the most enigmatic fact about his "arrival" in 1987 was the form of the book. Novel or autobiography? Novel as autobiography? Autobiography as novel? Reviewing *The Enigma of Arrival*, the late Anthony Burgess delivered a judgment that is equally appropriate for *A Way in the World*:

> This book, whatever we call it, is art of an exceptional order.... if this is not autobiography, it is because it admits more poetry, more descriptive detail, indeed more soul-baring than we can expect in a mere bundle of memoirs.... It has great dignity, compassion and candor. It is written with the expected beauty of style.

The Enigma of Arrival presents itself as fiction, but it can properly be seen as autobiography, much like Wordsworth's *The Prelude*: art that charts the anxious steps toward maturation of the artistic spirit. Devoid of sustained narrative energy, paying scant heed to the demands of characterization and indulging in reflective meditation, the book moves tentatively, but with elegance. Derek Walcott, in these pages, recognized the beauty of the novel's "periods" and commented ironically upon Naipaul's positioning of himself as an "English elegiac pastoralist," but he was finally unable to detect a change in Naipaul's tone and attitude. He observed no "mellowing," preferring eventually to judge Naipaul according to the strictures of familiar criticisms. Walcott commented that "Trinidad injured him. England saves him." He inferred that this is the thesis behind the novel:

> And if the cost to that [Naipaul's] spirit has meant virulent contempt toward the island of his origin, then rook, shaw and hedgerow, tillage and tradition will soothe him, because although he may reject his own soil, his own phantoms, the earth everywhere is forgiving, even in Trinidad, and rejects no one.

Walcott's graceful but dismissive characterization of the novel as a "melodious whine" failed to acknowledge Naipaul's attempt to continue the process of sitting in judgment on himself that he began with *Finding the Center*, a process that though still tainted with his familiar distemper, is nonetheless clearly visible in *The Enigma of Arrival*.

Naipaul's new book, like *The Enigma of Arrival*, advertises itself as a novel while paying scant attention to the imaginative demands of the novel form. This novel—or sequence, as it is subtitled—is a deceptively complex narrative in nine parts, comprised of autobiographical fragments that are set against reworkings of Naipaul's earlier writing. But, whichever way the narrative takes us it is always intimately connected to the life and work of one V. S. Naipaul, with characters, ideas, events from his past being elegantly juggled, set down and picked up again with a technical brilliance that comes with a lifetime's experience. Eliot's tribute to Lancelot Andrewes best

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sums up the majesty of *A Way in the World*: "In this extraordinary prose, which appears to repeat, to stand still, but is nevertheless proceeding in the most deliberate and orderly manner, there are often flashing phrases which never desert the memory."

In his opening chapter, aptly titled "An Inheritance," Naipaul takes us back to the Trinidad of his childhood and confesses to his current state of mind: "We cannot understand all the traits we have inherited. Sometimes we can be strangers to ourselves." This is an altogether different Naipaul from the man who wrote the stinging *Among the Believers*. Here we find a man not entirely sure of himself; it is, if truth be told, a more becoming Naipaul. As the novel unfolds we can clearly see the journey of his life fertilizing the work, the work fertilizing the life.

His own pilgrimage from Trinidad to Oxford to writer, from old world to new, from obscurity to fame, is mirrored in the stories of Sir Walter Raleigh and the Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco Miranda. These narratives form the heart of the novel, the Raleigh section a reworking of material that Naipaul first made use of in his history of the Spanish conquest, *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969), the 100-plus pages of Miranda, an obsession that Naipaul admits has concerned him for twenty-seven years. This Miranda section—or sequence—has a broad cinematic sweep to it as Naipaul indulges in scene-setting, high dramatic wordplay and anecdotal asides. He seems to be reveling in the sheer joy of prose-writing.

But *A Way in the World* assumes a more familiar sobriety when Naipaul recalls the imaginary Englishman, Foster Morris, an author who "helps" the narrator at the onset of his career, but who ultimately castigates him for "pretending to write a kind of Jamesian novel where the writer does not intrude too much." Morris seems to be a composite representative of the British literary establishment trying to control, shape and ultimately patronize a young colonial author. The narrator, however, soon dispenses with Foster's "services" and strikes out on his own as he comes to recognize that his own artistic development will necessarily take him beyond Foster and others like him. His rejection of Foster is fueled neither by pride nor by ingratitude; it is a necessary rejection if the narrator is to find his own voice and learn to trust his individual talent, irrespective of how marginal a talent it might appear to those at the "center."

Lebrun, a disaffected West Indian revolutionary, another "ghost" of narrators past, like so many others in this novel, is clearly C. L. R. James, an intellectual, revolutionary, ultimately "shipwrecked" man who lives on beyond his lifetime. But here, even while he affirms the correctness of his original judgment of Lebrun and his politics, Naipaul betrays an affection for a man who is finally , like himself, a Trinidadian in "exile" in England who has made a mark in the West. If this were all Naipaul had to say about Lebrun, it would in itself be a remarkable enough confession for Naipaul to be making. But in the most revealing passage in the entire novel, Naipaul's narrator stops and asks himself: "How could one enter the emotions of a black man as old as the century?" In any previous work by Naipaul, this would have been the end of it. A question proffered rhetorically, to be forgotten. But not in *A Way in the World*. Some thirty pages later, he not only makes the effort to understand these "emotions," but arrives at a brilliant and compassionate conclusion. When speaking of "the profile-writers and television interviewers" who pestered Lebrun in his later years, he makes the following observation:

> They risked nothing at all. They had no means of understanding or assessing a man who had been born early in the century into a very hard world, whose intellectual growth had at every stage been accompanied by a growing rawness of sensibility, and whose political resolutions, expressing the wish not to go mad, had been in the nature of spiritual struggles, occurring in the depth of his being.

In the light of this passage it seems remarkable that anybody could have ever charged Naipaul with possessing a dyspeptic attitude toward "primitives," let alone pointed the stern, accusatory finger of Negrophobia in his direction.

Perhaps the most disturbing, and memorable, "sequences" of the novel are those that retell the story of Blair. When the narrator was a 17-year-old clerk in the Registrar General's Department in Trinidad, waiting to go to England, busily copying out birth, marriage and death certificates, it was Blair, a 27-year-old senior clerk, who was responsible for checking Naipaul's work. Blair, whom everyone looked up to as an embodiment of industry, good manners and pride, sometime after the narrator's departure for England, predictably entered local politics. Many years later, when resident in Africa, the narrator receives word that Blair, like almost all the characters in this itinerant novel, is about to cross the water and take up a diplomatic posting close by. A poignant reunion between the narrator and Blair occurs, a reunion by

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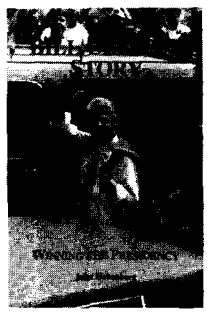

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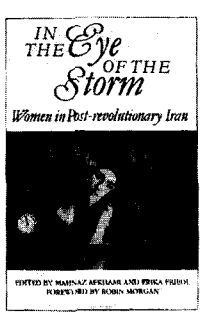

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turns awkward and tender, but as in the Lebrun sequence there is a concerted, and moving, attempt by the narrator to somehow repair the past.

The early work of most writers has a tendency to be written in the shadow of their own lives, the narratives often tracing the emotional contours of the writer's own development toward maturity. Naipaul is no exception. His early novels, *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) and the hectic, wonderful *Miguel Street* (1959), are replete with characters forged in the Trinidadian crucible that Naipaul remembers from his childhood. *A House for Mr. Biswas*, his fourth, and finest, fictional work, is a beautifully crafted Dickensian novel that pays a moving homage to the troubled life of his own father.

Curiously enough, in his autumn years, Naipaul seems to have come full circle. No longer the imaginative leaps of the middle period, as demonstrated in such novels as *Guerrillas*, *In a Free State* (1971) and *A Bend in the River*. *The Enigma of Arrival* and *A Way in the World* are, once more, written in the shadow of his own life. And mercifully, if somewhat surprisingly, we discover that Naipaul did not—as he would have once had us believe—give up everything for his art. That pinched, suffering face that for nigh on forty years has peered back at us from dust jackets has perhaps been more mask than we, or even he, realized. It is with a considerable sigh of relief that one can now look back at some of his more insistent sponsoring of the loneliness of a writer's life, to say nothing of his less politically palatable comments, and see them through the refining prism of *A Way in the World*. "One is so quickly condemned to being a writer," he observed in 1968, "to this intense loneliness: there's no one to help you go on and you must have total assurance and total honesty to get there." A decade or so later: "Dance? I've never danced. I'd be ashamed of it. It is something out of the jungle. It's undignified. I dislike all those lower-class cultural manifestations."

His Brahmanical fastidiousness, his waspish impatience with attitudes at variance with his Western outlook, his racism, all seem increasingly like the follies of a man making his way in the world. Yet in this novel he once more affirms that he is a man who began—in his own mind—from an "impossible" position, one about which those who praise him, as well as those who abhor him, probably have little idea. Now, near the end of his days, Naipaul is clearly wondering just how "impossible" this path was, and clearly deliberating over the question of whether he ever left home in the first place, for whatever else it is *A Way in the World* is a beautiful lament to the Trinidad he has so often denigrated.

That he has never allowed himself to be absorbed fully into the English tradition is something many critics have misunderstood. Naipaul is best understood as an inquiline, as a man whom the English have tried to absorb, but a man who has clung to displacement like a floating buoy. Only two years ago, in an interview with the Sunday *Times* of London, he made clear his feelings about England. "When I see the sun set—here at Stonehenge—there is a way that it is somebody else's sun, somebody else's history connected with it. I can't avoid that: that's the way I think." His views on Britain, although less well-publicized than his views on the developing world, are familiarly dismissive. In 1980, in an interview in *Newsweek* he described Mrs. Thatcher's country as one of "bum politicians, scruffy writers and crooked aristocrats.... This is not the country that led the world in industry and law." In his writings he has always distrusted the colonizer, while being unforgiving toward the colonized. But he has perhaps saved his sharpest words for those Westerners who visit "revolutionary lands" with return air tickets in their back pockets. In short, Naipaul has never much liked anybody, and he has never wanted to be a part of anybody's world.

In *The Enigma of Arrival* and *A Way in the World*, Naipaul challenges the notion of form, as well as trying to redefine and re-examine himself. Eight years ago, in a speech delivered in Chicago, Naipaul spoke of writers who have "their gifts diluted or corrupted by the novel form as it existed in their time." Naipaul has never been a formally inventive novelist, like Grass, Marquez or Kundera. In fact, he has often commented on his own loss of faith in the novel, and spoken of the novel "as a form that no longer carries conviction." Indeed, his wry Trinidadian social comedies of the early years have come to be recognized as his best fiction. The weighty fictions of the 1970s are outgrowths of his travel writing. Naipaul's discovery of, in his own words, "... a strange book—a strange and original and beautiful form, part autobiography, part literary criticism, part fiction—called *Against Sainte Beauve*, where the criticism of the critic and his method, releasing the writer's love of letters, also releases the autobiographical and fictive elements of the work," provided him with a Proustian mode for *The Enigma of Arrival* and now, *A Way in the World*.

His subject is himself. But his theme is a tender and delicate one: it is death. Naipaul is engaged in rumination of the most superior kind as he awaits the inevitable. This period of taking stock is being written out in brave, philosophical prose and Naipaul, while not apologizing for his "furrowed brow" and previous judgments, is clearly trying to explain his life to himself, and in turn himself to us. And this is fascinating to partake of. Why begrudge Naipaul the largess to play with form, to debunk, to tease? Novel? Sequence? Who cares. Naipaul is certainly no longer a novelist in the conventional sense. And he is too tired, his mind too set, to travel with the hawklike vigor of his middle years. Proustian reminiscence seems an appropriate way for him to celebrate himself and his achievement.

At the end of the novel, in the final section, "Home Again," the narrator speaks of Blair, his old Trinidadian colleague who, shortly after their reunion in Africa, is tragically murdered. The narrator imagines the details of Blair's body being returned to Trinidad, and at this moment the heart quickens, for it becomes clear to the reader that Naipaul is speaking eloquently, and with a wistful passion, about himself:

> The body would have been embalmed in Africa; that meant the internal organs would have been removed. At the airport in Trinidad the flaps of the hold would have opened, and when the time came the box would have been transferred to a low trailer, and perhaps in some way hidden or covered. There would have been formalities. Would the embalmed body in its box then have been transferred to a hearse? The hearse didn't seem right. I made inquiries. I was told that the box would have been taken away in an ambulance to Port of Spain, and then the shell of the man would have been laid out in Parry's chapel of rest.

Naipaul's great achievement is now to be making art out of displacement and despair. He has found an appropriate form, and with this novel he has cleared the way for a fuller reconciliation with his past. I say "fuller" for, like Stevens in *The Remains of the Day*, Naipaul sits on a bench in England casting his mind back over his life, and he, too, fails to admit to any knowledge of that one supremely important word: love. This notion of spiritual and emotional self-dependency is perhaps the final myth that Naipaul continues to promote about himself. He has been married for many years, yet his wife is never mentioned in his travel or autobiographical writings. In *An Area of Darkness* (1964) he once refers to his "companion," but once only. Love. That word

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is so glaringly absent in even as moving a book as *A Way in the World* that one is left with the feeling that Naipaul, in what time remains, has a final journey to make. That of quarrying his way toward the employment of the one word that would further enhance the status of this considerable man and this supremely gifted writer.

CARYL PHILLIPS is the author of five novels, including *Cambridge* (Vintage) and *Crossing the River* (Knopf). He teaches at Amherst College.

Dissent and Dogma

BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

Culture and Anarchy by Matthew Arnold edited by Samuel Lipman

(Yale University Press, 289 pp., $30, $11 paper)

In the "culture wars" currently being waged in the universities and the media, the very title of *Culture and Anarchy* has a combative ring. Matthew Arnold himself is often invoked as a partisan, if not as the commander in chief, of the forces doing battle for "culture" and against "multiculturalism," culture being associated with the common heritage symbolized by the Great Books and Western Civilization, and multiculturalism with the distinctive cultures of classes, races, sexes, ethnic groups and whatever other minorities are said to be "marginalized."

It was in another contentious period, the student "revolution" of 1968, which happened to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the appearance of Arnold's book, that I first introduced *Culture and Anarchy* to a graduate seminar. Then, too, it seemed peculiarly relevant, but for a different reason. The issue at that time was not so much culture as authority: the authority of the educational "establishment" most immediately, and authority in general. If Arnold is on the side of culture now, he was just as assuredly on the side of authority then.

Rereading the book today, one is aware of anomalies that should give pause to both sides. It is these anomalies that make its republication, with commentaries by four distinguished critics, a cultural event in its own right. *Culture and Anarchy* is unquestionably "politically incorrect." Indeed, it was politically incorrect when it first appeared—for conservatives, for liberals and for radicals.

What Arnold meant by "culture" and "anarchy" is not what his contemporaries meant by those words, or what we mean by them. His culture is not the genteel culture of "belles lettres" and "dead languages" that his critics mocked. Nor is it popular culture, as we now understand that term. Although it is rooted in classical culture, Arnold's culture looks forward rather than backward; it is a prescription for a common, progressive, universal culture that would elevate and unify all classes. This culture is nothing less than the study and the pursuit of "total perfection," "the best which has been thought and said in the world." It is inspired not by reason alone but by "right reason," the reason that comes from the "best self" rather than the "ordinary self." It seeks to cultivate the "free play" of thought, the "sheer desire to see things as they are." It is what Jonathan Swift, in *The Battle of the Books*, calls "sweetness and light," beauty and intelligence, the "two noblest of things" that together constitute "human perfection."

If this idea of culture seems to us (as it did to many of Arnold's contemporaries) almost unbearably high-minded, his idea of anarchy is only a little less so. Anarchy is "doing as one likes." Mill is never mentioned by name, but the allusion could not have escaped his readers, for it was only a few years earlier that Mill had defined liberty in precisely those terms. Arnold finds evidence of the insidious spirit of "social anarchy" in the Hyde Park riot of July 1866, a demonstration for electoral reform that turned disorderly when access to the park was prohibited. The mob, affirming "an Englishman's best and most blissful right of doing what he likes," proceeded to rob and beat bystanders, while the alderman of the City of London, reluctant to assert his authority, ordered the militia not to interfere.

This image of social anarchy is so dramatic that it may overshadow the more important sense of anarchy as Arnold understands it: cultural anarchy, not only

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doing as one likes but thinking and speaking as one likes. In contrast to the "free play" of thought that Arnold identifies with culture, this kind of free thought is guided only by the will to freedom—by no "standard of excellence," no ideal of "perfection," no "paramount authority of right reason," no recognition of the "best self." To the liberal politician who finds the greatness of England in the right of every Englishman to "say what he likes," Arnold retorts that the aspirations of culture are satisfied only if "what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying, has good in it and more good than bad."

So far Arnold's "anarchy" is the obverse of Mill's "liberty." But it goes well beyond that, becoming an indictment not only of liberalism but of what Arnold calls "Hebraism." Indeed, the antithesis between "culture" and "anarchy" can only be understood in the context of the larger Arnoldian dichotomy of "Hellenism" and "Hebraism." "Hellenism" is culture: right reason, the study of perfection, the free play of mind, the desire to see thigs as they really are. "Hebraism" is anarchy—but a very peculiar kind of anarchy, because it is rooted in an overweening concern for morality, good conduct, obedience to scripture and law. It is not "social anarchy," but intellectual, cultural and spiritual anarchy. If the governing principle of Hellenism is the "spontaneity of consciousness," that of Hebraism is the "strictness of conscience." Hellenism is "right thinking"; Hebraism is "right acting." Arnold concedes that both are necessary for the "totality of perfection." But he leaves no doubt that "the one thing needful" in his own day is more thought and less action, more knowing and less doing. "To act is easy," he quotes Goethe, "to think is hard."

Hebraism, in Arnold's lexicon, is a euphemism for nonconformism. It is not, as one might think, synonymous with religion or revelation, to which Hellenism is often counterposed. In fact, one religious institution, the Church of England, plays an essential role in Arnold's conception of culture and therefore in Hellenism. By combining the "will of God" with "right reason," Anglicanism succeeds in producing a religious establishment that is both temperate in doctrine and national in scope, thus fulfilling the individual's spiritual and social needs while liberating him for the pursuit of culture:

> Instead of battling for his own private forms for expressing the inexpressible and defining the undefinable, a man takes those which have commended themselves most to the religious life of his nation; and while he may be sure that within those forms the religious side of his own nature may find its satisfaction, he has leisure and composure to satisfy other sides of his nature as well.

Nonconformism, on the other hand, has neither the religious latitude nor the national character of Anglicanism. It is a "hole and corner religion," narrow, sectarian, literal-minded, proud in its dissenting role—"The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion," as the motto of one nonconformist journal put it. Because it is provincial and parochial, it has produced no man "of the highest spiritual significance." The only great nonconformists (Milton, Wesley) had been trained in the establishment. Roman Catholicism and Judaism can boast of such men, but that is because they themselves are establishments—not national establishments, to be sure, but cosmopolitan ones.

The Hebraic, or nonconformist, ethic is also antithetical to culture because it favors the external aspects of life, not only by emphasizing doing rather than thinking, but also by putting a high value on wealth, material comforts, technological progress and bodily vigor. It is curious to read Arnold's veiled criticism of his father in his derogatory references to "Muscular Christianity" (a label often applied to Thomas Arnold) and his disparagement of field sports and exercise (which were cultivated so assiduously at Rugby under the mastership of the elder Arnold). Unlike the Greeks, Arnold explains, for whom exercise was intimately related to the idea of "complete human perfection and happiness," modern man has a mechanical attitude to sport and exercise, as he does to all human affairs, seeking salvation in the outward manifestations of conduct and action.

Hebraism, in short, is "philistinism," a term first popularized by Arnold. As the principle of nonconformism represents religious equality, so the principle of philistinism represents cultural equality. The middle class is quintessentially philistine, since it makes "everyman" the arbiter in business, in politics, in religion and in mind. The aristocracy (the "barbarians," as Arnold calls them) provides no alternative to philistinism, since it, too, is concerned only with external things and is conspicuously lacking in ideas or spirit. ("One has often wondered whether upon the whole earth there is anything so unintelligent, so unapt to perceive how the world is really going, as an ordinary young Englishman of our upper class.") The philistine attitude spills over into the "populace," the working class, half of which already aspires to the condition of the middle class; the inevitable triumph of this class will only bring with it a new form of philistinism. The common denominator of all the classes is the philistine assumption that happiness consists in "doing what one's ordinary self likes"; they have different notions of what that self likes, but it is always the ordinary self that prevails. (America is the philistine nation par excellence, with "the Barbarians quite left out, and the Populace nearly.")

"I myself," Arnold declares, "am properly a Philistine"—that is, a member of the middle class. But he is middle class with a difference. Indeed, all the classes have something of each other in them, and all of them have "aliens," independent spirits like Arnold himself, who are distinguished not by their class spirit but by a "general *humane* spirit," a "curiosity about their best self" and a "love of human perfection." These aliens are the bearers of culture. They, too, need encouragement from without, a "source of authority" not only in their own best selves but also in the world. In England that authority is found in two institutions: the established church and the state.

Arnold professes to be a liberal: "I am a liberal, yet I am a liberal tempered by experience, reflection and renouncement, and I am, above all, a believer in culture." So tempered is his liberalism that few liberals of his time (and fewer still of ours) would recognize him as one of their own. If Arnold had not already offended them with his criticism of "doing as one likes," and, still more, of saying and thinking as one likes, his views on church and state would put him outside the pale. For he defends the church establishment more vigorously than most liberals (with the notable exception of Gladstone), and he associates that establishment with a state whose authority goes well beyond what any liberal (including Gladstone) would tolerate.

The state, as Arnold sees it, is not only a bulwark against anarchy. It is also the mainstay of culture:

> Thus, in our eyes, the very framework and exterior order of the State, is sacred; and culture is the most resolute enemy of anarchy, because of the great hopes and designs for the State which culture teaches us to nourish. But as, believing in right reason, and having faith in the progress of humanity towards perfection and ever laboring for this end, we grow to have clearer sight of the ideas of right reason, and of the elements and helps of perfection, and as we come gradually to fill the framework of the State with them, to fashion its internal composition and all its laws and institutions conformably to them, and to make the State more and more the expression, as we say, of our best self, which is not manifold, and vulgar, and unstable, and contentious and ever-varying, but one, and noble, and secure, and peaceful and the same for all

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mankind,—with what aversion shall we not *then* regard anarchy, with what firmness shall we not check it, when there is so much that is so precious which it will endanger!

If it is true, as is generally believed, that Arnold never read Hegel, it is all the more remarkable that he should have produced so perfectly Hegelian a view of the state—and so "politically incorrect" a view, "incorrect" for the England of his day as much as the America of ours, and for conservatives as much as liberals. What, then, can one make of this "alien" thinker today? What is the relevance of *Culture and Anarchy* for our time?

The commentators in this edition address just this question. The three Americans, Steven Marcus, Gerald Graff and Samuel Lipman, focus on the issue that has emerged so prominently in this country in recent years—multiculturalism. As if in direct rebuttal to Arnold, multiculturalism insists that there is no unifying "culture," no "right reason" or "best self," no idea of "perfection." Instead, every ethnic, racial, sexual and social group produces its own cultural forms and distinctive "values," all of which are deemed to be equally valid and compelling. Any attempt to impose or even to encourage a "hegemonic" culture, let alone one supported by a religious establishment or, worse yet, the state itself, is "totalizing" and "totalitarian."

Multiculturalism is thus precisely the antithesis of Arnold's "culture" and the epitome of Arnold's "anarchy." It is, he would have said, "the Dissidence of Dissent," the exemplar of provinciality and parochialism, the triumph of the "ordinary self" over the "best self"—a best self "which is not manifold, and vulgar, and unstable, and contentious and ever-varying, but one, and noble, and secure, and peaceful and the same for all mankind."

On this issue Marcus and Lipman, whatever other reservations they have about Arnold, are in agreement with him. Marcus is not convinced by Arnold's attempt to displace religious belief by some "protean conception of culture," nor by his assignment to the state of the role of culture-bearer for the nation. But he does find Arnold's description of nineteenth-century British nonconformism reminiscent of the multiculturalism of our own time, and his conception of culture a valuable antidote to the divisive tendencies in our own society. "This is the *social idea*," he quotes Arnold, "and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality," for it is they who carry "from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge of their time ... to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and the learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time."

Lipman quotes the same passage, commending Arnold for his implicit criticism not only of multiculturalism—that "anthropological omnium-gatherum" of cultures—but also of the degraded popular culture of our day. Just as Arnold's culture unites and humanizes all classes, so our popular culture brutalizes and depraves them, "rich and poor, white and black, young and old." Arnold, Lipman allows, misconstrued the nature of the state; he did not see that it contained within itself the seeds of "monstrous tyranny." He also overestimated the power of the religious and educational establishments to build a "social consensus." But in his understanding of culture and anarchy and his appreciation of the connection between culture and conduct, he has earned "a secure place for himself in Western civilization."

If Arnold is the apostle of culture, Gerald Graff might be said to be the apostle of anarchy, at least in Arnold's sense of that term. Graff's quarrel with Arnold is not only on the subject of culture, but even more on the subject of reason. Arnold's reason, he points out, is not rational in the philosophical sense; it is not the reason of Aristotle, Descartes or Kant. Nor is his reason the free play of consciousness that he professes to believe in, because that would jeopardize his notion of a common culture. It is the multiculturalist, Graff suggests, who has the better claim to reason, because it is he who subjects the dominant culture to critical inquiry, whereas Arnold merely identifies culture with an establishment, which is an unreasoned tradition. As for the common culture that Arnold espouses, that too is illusive, for in a democracy the common culture can only be a "common *debate* over culture." Arnold's great mistake was his inability to imagine "a vital culture whose citizens simply agree to disagree about religion, art, philosophy, morality and politics."

This is an interesting argument, but not a persuasive one. If Arnold was unable to imagine a "common culture" that has nothing in common, where people disagree about virtually everything of importance in the life of the individual and of the community—religion, art, philosophy, morality, politics—others may have the same difficulty. To agree to disagree is surely an essential part of a common culture, but it can hardly be the whole of it; it may be a recipe for tribal coexistence (or tribal warfare, in which the agreement concerns only the rules of warfare), but not for a stable, healthy, vigorous society. Nor is Graff's appropriation of "reason" more conclusive, for an important strain of "cultural radicalism," he acknowledges (and of multiculturalism in particular), is the denial of reason in the ordinary sense, let alone anything like Arnold's "right reason." Reason—"linear logic," as it is derogatorily called—is said to be the product of the "hegemonic," "patriarchal" "Eurocentric" culture. This view of reason is at the heart of the multiculturalist critique of Western culture.

Maurice Cowling, the only English contributor to this volume, has a different quarrel with Arnold. He concedes that Arnold may be a valuable corrective to American academic and political idiosyncrasies, but he warns against consecrating him as an apostle of conservativism. For Arnold had a fatal flaw: a conception of religion that is faulty in itself and that is inconsistent with a truly conservative sense of politics, morals and culture. Arnold may have intended to reconstruct religion so that it would become a vital part of modern culture, "but the sap which seeps out of an author is as important as the intention, and the sap which seeps out of Arnold is a sap which sucks out of Christianity almost everything that has been distinctive about it."

Drawing largely upon Arnold's other writings, Cowling concludes that the effect of his teaching is not to revivify Christianity by purging it of nonconformist parochialism, but to enervate it by treating the Bible as literature and making the Church of England an instrument for national unity—the latter in the vain hope of bringing the working classes "within the pale of the religious constitution." Culture's role is, in effect, to "translate theology" into cultural and social terms. In the course of that translation, however, little remains of "orthodox, historic, dogmatic, theological Christianity." And even less is left of the original purpose of the enterprise, for "Arnoldianism," in England at least, has become the creed of the university-educated classes. So far from promoting social solidarity, it has proved to be socially divisive, creating an "anti-populist, high-minded 'correctness' " that is essentially "unconservative." In the name of true conservativism, Cowling concludes by giving Arnold not three, not even two, but only one-and-a-half cheers.

It is curious that none of the commentators, with the exception of Lipman, raises another issue that may cause a liberal, as much as a conservative, to withhold a cheer or two from Arnold; and Lipman, while broaching the subject, does not see it as a problem. Toward the

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end of his essay, Lipman quotes a passage from the preface to *Culture and Anarchy* in which Arnold pays tribute to "the habits and discipline received from Hebraism [which] remain for our race an eternal possession." Lipman concludes that this is why the book is so relevant today: it shows "the integral connection between culture and conduct," between "the mental life and the moral life." But that is certainly not the main thrust of the book. On the contrary, Arnold's insistent theme is the opposition between culture and conduct, between the mental life and the moral life, between Hellenism and Hebraism.

There is a passage in *Culture and Anarchy* that suggests a possible reconciliation of these opposing forces. Is it not, Arnold asks, the just reward of the "long discipline of Hebraism" that, "in the fullness of time ... man's two great natural forces," Hebraism and Hellenism, "should no longer be dissociated and rival, but should be a joint force of right thinking and strong doing to carry him on towards perfection"? But that is in the fullness of time. In the here and now, for Arnold as for the present-day reader of his book, the message is not the conjunction or even the compatibility of Hebraism and Hellenism; it is their disjunction and their incompatibility, with Arnold himself serving as a passionate defender of Hellenism and a harsh critic of Hebraism. Moreover, Hebraism is faulted for its moralism as much as its materialism, for the "strictness of conscience" that inhibits, if it does not altogether prevent, the "spontaneity of consciousness" that is the glory of Hellenism.

There has been much discussion about this antithesis of Hebraism and Hellenism: whether it reflects an animus toward Judaism over and above that displayed toward nonconformism; whether Christianity itself, and not merely nonconformism, is implicated in the critique of Hebraism; and whether Arnold's conception of either Hebraism or Hellenism corresponds to the historical reality. The more urgent question for us, however, is the one that Arnold himself asked. What is "the one thing needful"? Is it a greater dose of Hellenism or of Hebraism, of consciousness or of conscience?

Much of the present appeal of Arnold, to those unfashionable souls who find him appealing, derives from his stance in the "culture wars." He is clearly on the side of what for shorthand purposes has been called the "canon": the idea that there is such a thing as Great Books ("the best which has been thought and said"), and that those books transcend the bounds of race, class and gender. It should also be said that for Arnold, as for his latter-day admirers, that canon is subject to revision and expansion. This is implicit, after all, in his notion of "play of mind."

But some of his appeal also comes from a misunderstanding of his idea of anarchy. We take him to mean by anarchy what we mean by it: crime, violence, incivility, immorality—the "externals" of conduct and behavior that Arnold surely deplores (as in the case of the Hyde Park riot). But his anarchy goes well beyond this kind of disorder and misconduct. It is Hebraism itself, the overweening concern for "right acting" rather than "right thinking," for "conscience" rather than "consciousness," that he regards as anarchic because it denies the superior claims of culture. In his terms, those who think that one of the major problems of our times is the moral disarray of society are as guilty of Hebraism and philistinism as the most dissenting of dissenting ministers.

If Arnold was so enthusiastic a Hellenist, it was perhaps because he was so much a Victorian. Like all good Victorians, he was able to rebel against Victorianism secure in the knowledge that Victorian society was firm enough to withstand his rebellion. It was thus that Mill, who had a thoroughly conventional, even puritanical view of morality (and of sexual morality particularly), could take so radical a view of liberty and individuality, professing to welcome "experiments in living" and encouraging people to act upon their "personal impulses and preferences," their "eccentricities" and "peculiarities." He did so in the assurance that those experiments and eccentricities would not go beyond common "decency," and that if they did they would be properly suppressed and punished. Similarly, Arnold, himself the most proper of Victorians, could take so broad-minded a view of Hellenism and so narrow-minded a view of Hebraism, confident that society would continue to sustain the Hebraic "discipline" that made for a moral, civil, law-abiding community.

Toward the end of the preface of *Culture and Anarchy* (written after the chapters had appeared serially in the *Cornhill Magazine*), Arnold encapsulated his message about "the one thing needful": "Now, and for us, it is a time to Hellenize, and to praise knowing; for we have Hebraized too much, and have overvalued doing." He then added, as if anticipating the obvious criticism: "But the habits and discipline received from Hebraism remain for our race an eternal possession; and, as humanity is constituted, one must never assign them the second rank today, without being ready to restore them to the first rank tomorrow."

Tomorrow, some of us would say, is today. We might even suspect that were Arnold alive today, he might agree that if ever there was a time to restore those Hebraic habits and discipline to the "first rank," it is now. For we are confronted not with one thing needful, but with two things needful. If Hellenism is a corrective to the cultural anarchy of our time, Hebraism is just as surely a corrective to the moral and social anarchy. Now more than ever we can see that the two are not only compatible, they are inseparable.

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB is the author most recently of *On Looking into the Abyss: Untimely Thoughts on Culture and Society* (Knopf).

Family Ties

BY RICHARD WHITE

The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America by John Demos

(Knopf, 315 pp., $25)

In *The Unredeemed Captive* John Demos retells a very old and once famous American story. In 1704 a French and Indian raiding party attacked Deerfield, Massachusetts. Their particular target, Demos suggests, was the Reverend John Williams, whom they hoped to capture and to exchange for a French privateer languishing in a Boston jail. The raiding party surprised and sacked the town, burning a part of it. Williams and his surviving family were among the 112 captives that the French and Indians marched through the winter snows to Canada. Forty-eight other residents of Deerfield died in the ruins of the town or in neighboring fields. Among the

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dead were two of Williams's small children and Pementha, his female black slave.

The killings of children and slaves were emblematic of those that followed. They were cruel, but not capricious. The captors killed the weak. They hatcheted those who slowed or might slow their escape, such as small children and women still exhausted from childbirth. Eunice Williams, Williams's wife, died from a hatchet to her head two days out. (The only exception to this calculated killing was the death of Williams's manservant, a black slave. When the French and Indians got drunk, they assaulted and murdered him.) And yet interspersed with atrocities were acts of kindness: food was shared and children were carried on shoulders through the snow. Among those carried was a younger Eunice Williams, 7 years old and named for her now-murdered mother.

In Canada some of the captives went with the Indians, others were ransomed by the French. Families were separated; priests and masters pressed the captives to convert to Catholicism. Gradually the large majority of those who survived the ordeal were exchanged and repatriated. Williams returned from captivity in 1706 and in 1707 came back to Deerfield, where he reunited the remnants of his family. But among those who did not return was his daughter Eunice.

Williams wrote a narrative of the raid and the captivity. *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion* touched a chord that resonated with eighteenth-century New Englanders. Through Williams's experience, they confronted their deepest fears. Their collective task, as they understood it, was to redeem a wilderness, but they worried that on this errand into the wilderness they might themselves become lost, that the wilderness, as Demos puts it, "might change, might *un*civilize, them." Or, even worse, that they might be captured and physically removed to live as prisoners among the Indians. They would be forced to adjust to the "brutish ways" of their captors. And at the heart of this nightmare lay the fear that they might actually come to prefer Indian ways, that they would willingly turn "savage." For eighteenth-century New Englanders Deerfield was the nightmare put into play; Williams represented the complicated triumph over it. In good Puritan fashion Williams plumbed the meaning of his experience and sought God's message and lessons in it.

But what about Eunice, the unredeemed captive, the captive who in 1713, at the age of 16, refused to come home? She was by then married and converted to Catholicism, and living among people who had become her kin. She greeted emissaries sent to redeem her with a steely silence. She spoke—in Iroquois—only to tell them that she would have gone to see her father before this if he had not remarried. When Williams himself came, she would not, as he said, "so much as give me one pleasant look." She refused to explain herself and so Demos, in one of his few false moves, speaks for her. He resorts to fiction, articulating her resentments against a father who failed to protect her. Such twentieth-century psychologizing grates. It violates Eunice's own silence, which is more forceful than Demos's fiction. Demos more persuasively interprets Williams's later published sermons to suggest that he obliquely and indirectly came to see his daughter as dishonoring him, as failing in her filial obligations.

It was the experience of Williams that gave the story meaning in the eighteenth century, but it is the experience of Eunice Williams that gives the story meaning for us. And it is Demos's ability to explore these two sets of meanings, holding both steadily before us, that makes this such a rich and gripping history. Demos complicates the tale: he takes the narrative of the tragic John Williams, the universal Puritan who stood for all of us, and makes it into a much more tangled set of stories. These stories begin in England, Iroquoia, Dedham, Deerfield and Madrid and then converge.

Among the tales is that of Kahnawake, the place where Eunice Williams would spend the rest of her long life. This town of "praying Iroquois" on the St. Lawrence River near Montreal, whose residents smuggled furs back and forth between Albany and Canada, became one of the largest Indian settlements in North America during the early eighteenth century. Demos writes brilliantly of Kahnawake. He has largely ignored Indian peoples in his previous books about colonial New England, and even now he admits that he feels "incapable of understanding Indians well enough to place them right at center stage." But his own humility works to his advantage. He seeks to explain Kahnawake as he finds it: a complicated and contingent place, the product of a tangled history. Kahnawake does not stand for "Indians" or "Native Americans" or "savages," but for a particular set of American experiences *that created* a distinctive group of Indian people.

Kahnawake is paired with Deerfield in Demos's narrative. Like Deerfield, it was recently settled. Like Deerfield, it sat at the edge of the buffer zone separating New France from New England and New York. Like Deerfield, it claimed special Christian sanction in its settlement; its people thought of themselves as particular expressions of God's will. And like Deerfield, it was a town repeatedly caught up in the struggle of empires.

Ironically, the ultimate destination of

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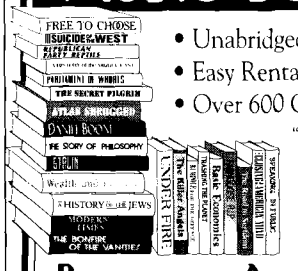

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so many English captives was itself a town founded, in part, by captives and descendants of captives. Many of the Mohawks who settled there were originally Hurons, Eries, Neutrals or others captured and adopted during the Iroquois wars of the seventeenth century. They were tied by kinship to the Iroquois, but they were separated by religion. Most were Catholics, but there were also "half-Catholics" and devotees of "ancestral religions." In Kahnawake, Indians become Catholics and English people become Indians. Kahnawake was about surprising combinations, unexpected connections, the unintended creations that lay in the cracks of empire.

Kahnawake was thus neither "pagan" nor "savage" nor unambiguously "Indian," and to follow Eunice Williams between Deerfield and Kahnawake is to lose the easy divisions of race, religion and civilization that structured the Puritans' understanding of Williams's captivity. It is to penetrate a far more complicated world where the lines dividing Protestant from Catholic, white from Indian, and civilized from savage were permeable rather than solid. Taken by the Indians, Eunice was baptized as Margaret but also called by an Iroquois name, A'ongote. Later on she married an Indian. According to a pastor who knew her brother, her great fear of returning to New England to live was that it might cost her her soul.

If *The Unredeemed Captive* ended here, with Eunice's decision to stay, marry and live in Kahnawake, it would be a fine history, a necessary corrective to the stark polarities of Williams's *Redeemed Captive.* Demos, however, has pushed beyond this. Having recognized this mixing, these connections, he teases out the thin strands of information that remain concerning the contacts between Eunice and her new Indian family on the one hand and her old family, her brothers and sisters in New England, on the other. And in doing this he creates a story that resonates for us the way Williams's story resonated for eighteenth-century New Englanders. Demos's tale keeps doubling back on itself; broken connections are remade in new ways. Puritans feared impurity, but it is mixture, contamination and impurity that are at the heart of this story.

The connections, Demos shows us, were too resilient to be permanently broken; events kept throwing people back together. The boundaries were too flexible for total separation to occur. Eunice Williams's transformation was quite real. Seven years old at her capture and already able to read, she was prohibited by her captors from speaking English, and she forgot her native tongue. The Puritans feared boundary crossings for it was such crossings that turned Eunice into Margaret / A'ongote. And yet the transformation was neither complete nor final. Demos's subtitle is "A Family Story from Early America." Eunice Williams never agreed to return, but following Williams's death, she did visit her brothers and sisters at Deerfield and elsewhere in New England. She brought her husband and family. Her English relatives sought to lure her and her Indian family back.

The New England Williamses failed in their immediate goal, but roughly the last third of this book tells the story of these visits. In particular, it tells the story of the renewed relations between Eunice and her brother Stephen, who became pastor in Long Meadow, Massachusetts, and who struggled to reverse his sister's decision. Stephen Williams hated papists and took a leading role in the wars against the French and their Indian allies. His sister was a papist and her new Indian family fought as allies of New France. Nearly twenty years passed between her visits of the early 1740s and her last trip to New England in 1761. Eunice and Stephen no longer shared a common tongue, and yet amidst strife and distance, cords remained unbroken.

And the tangle deepens. Each of Eunice's English siblings had a daughter named Eunice, in doubled remembrance of a grandmother murdered by Indians and an aunt who became an Indian. Eunice's brother Stephen, himself once a captive educated by Indians, takes in Indians to be educated in the English manner "for their benefit and advantage." Eunice's grandson, Thomas Thorakwaneken, would visit his New England friends in 1785, stopping at Deerfield. And in 1800, nearly a century after the attack, he brought two of his children to be educated at the invitation of Deacon Nathaniel Ely, the husband of one of Stephen Williams's granddaughters. Neither boy could speak English. They were back in their great-grandmother's country, and like their great-grandmother they would have to learn the ways of strangers who claimed them as kin.

A generation later, in 1837, long after that "woeful night" when the Williamses began their captivity, "Several Indians of Both Sexes Supposed to be Descendants of Eunice Williams" visited Deerfield. They came to visit the graves of their ancestors: the Rev. Williams and his wife. They attended divine services and heard a sermon that was later reprinted. "The varieties of human Nature," the preacher began, "would seem on first inspection" to deny belief in common origins. Yet not only Scripture but experience argued otherwise. For present within the congregation were people in whom were blended together "the blood of two races so distinct and unlike and once so hostile and irreconcilable."

The presence of these descendants of Eunice Williams called to mind the barbarous cruelties of 1704, but the preacher looked beyond these cruelties to a time even deeper in Deerfield's past. He looked to the eviction of the Indians who had lived there before the founders came. And he raised the question of whether this first violation of the commandment that forbids us "to covet anything which is our neighbor's" had not been the engine that drove the whole bloody train that followed. The preacher closed on a note of reconciliation, accepting the common humanity of all whom this past full of wrongs had created.

This is where Demos ends his story. There is nothing pure. There is only a blending together. That is what resonates now in modern America. Eunice Williams was a captive; and for captives, hostages and redemptions we need go no further than the evening news. But these easy parallels are not what should move us in this story. It touches something much deeper about our national experience.

What Demos has accomplished here is the kind of balancing act that historians constantly strive for but seldom achieve. He has, on the one hand, made clear the irredeemable strangeness of the past. Neither the Puritans of Deerfield, the Iroquois of Kahnawake or the French of Montreal are people like us. Their worlds are not our world; their meanings

Spoke Song

velo pack's silvery
revolving
harmonic numbers

thin
ghostly ends
within hands' intense
slashed
lightning-stroke jerseys

zip over a wild
stone-
vowelled bridge on
the rhone

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are not our meanings. And yet, at the very same time, Demos makes their experience speak to us with a clarity that mocks that distance. They speak to us as fellow human beings. They present us with possibilities we might not otherwise consider. They confront us with situations different from anything we might experience and yet these experiences somehow parallel our actual condition so hauntingly and tellingly that in looking at them we question our own easy understandings of the world and perceive other meanings in our own experience.

And what do these experiences cause us to question? In these years of renewed obsession with purity and authenticity, they remind us that we are at root a dirty people. There is nothing pure about us. We are inextricably mixed, joined as firmly by the injustices in our common history as by whatever love binds disparate pasts into families. That is a powerful and useful lesson.

RICHARD WHITE is professor of history at the University of Washington. He is the author most recently of *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650-1815* (Cambridge University Press).

The Terror and the Pity

BY HERMIONE LEE

House of Splendid Isolation by Edna O'Brien

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 232 pp., $21)

"The Ireland you're chasing is a dream ... doesn't exist anymore .... It's gone. *It's with O'Leary in the grave.*" That's what we're told. The heroes have become terrorists, Queen Maeve is a battered wife, the big house is derelict. As Mary Hooligan says at the end of Edna O'Brien's novel *Night* (1972), "The harp that once through Tara's halls is silenced, mute." Baba, one of the original "country girls" from the fine Irish trilogy that made O'Brien's name in the 1960s, looks back on the past, twenty-five years later, in a bitter "Epilogue" written in 1987. She savages anything that will tear at her heartstrings as "pure slop": "Too fucking elegiac." Yet Baba ends her retrospect lamenting, "I want time to be put back, I want it to be yesterday." And even Mary Hooligan, long exiled from the "glorified bog" of her birth, calls out, "O Connemara, oh sweet mauve forgotten hills." In *House of Splendid Isolation*, too, "Romantic Ireland" is far from dead and gone. It's lurking all over the place. Cuchulain rides again, blue eyes blaze once more, legends and ghosts return to haunt us. The past is execrated, but the past is yearned for. The grim realities all have soft centers.

The plot itself makes you feel you have been here before. A notorious escaped terrorist from the North, McGreevy, known as "the Beast," breaks into a house in the west of Ireland. He's heard about it from an IRA sympathizer who used to work there, and it's well-placed for the job he has to do, the killing of a retired British judge (an echo of the assassination of Mountbatten in 1979) who takes his holidays boating on the lake nearby. (This is a return to O'Brien-land, the boggy and mountainous country near Limerick, around the Shannon and Lough Derg, the part of Ireland, it is said, that holds "the powers of darkness in it.")

McGreevy first terrifies, then builds up a relationship with, the elderly widow, Josie, who is living in the house alone after a period in a nursing home. Their confrontation requires him to justify his life to her, and requires her to recall her past. Meanwhile a net closes around him. The local guard, Rory (who goes deer hunting in his spare time, laments his lost athletic youth and has a personal obsession with catching "the Beast"), is on his trail. He picks up the clues he needs from Josie, and from the girl who loves McGreevy and believes in his cause—her mother still calls the police the Black and Tans. Yes, thinks the mother, it is going to be "a fateful night on the mountain." And so it proves.

This strong but familiar story, revolving around the tense relationship between the terrorist and his unwilling host, is something like Brian Moore's *Lies of Silence*, but without his spare, driving pace; or like *Cal*, but without the sex. There *is* sex in the novel, of course, but it's in Josie's past, and all of it is bad. Her relationships follow the usual course of women's lives in O'Brien's fiction. Her kind of heroine is summed up by this sentence in *Time and Tide* (1992), which describes a woman victimized by a grotesquely hateful husband: "Her emotions were all tangled and she yearned now for a massive love." What an O'Brien heroine mostly gets instead is a massive martyrdom, especially if (as in one of her best stories, "A Scandalous Woman") she is living in Ireland, "a land of shame, a land of murder and a land of strange, throttled, sacrificial women."

Josie is no exception. Driven away from her home by a jealous mother into years of servitude as a maid in Brooklyn, she returned to Ireland as the bride of "a man she scarcely knew," to find herself captive to a sad, violent drunkard who abuses and rapes her (or in O'Brien-speak, "mounts her with a lingual gusto"), and who has always in his eyes "a vacancy, like a lost stunned animal, far from home." The local men are all the same, either loathing her, like her husband's brother, or lusting after her, like the doctor who thinks of her as "a woman asking to be broken in," or worshipping her from afar, like Paud, who has two simple passions, his mistress and a united Ireland. There's only one exception, the gorgeous cultured priest ("his eyes were dark," "his smile was utter") who drives her into a frenzy of fantasized romance. ("In a silence they will couple, their shadow selves going beyond the gates of propriety to the deeper hungers within.... They are meant, like tubers under winter bedding.") But he turns out to be as terrified of women as the rest of them. She aborts her child, the priest humiliates her, her husband is killed in a messy accident, she goes mad.

All this is laid on so thick because Josie has to stand in for Ireland's troubles. Her "isolation" in the old house is like the island's, claustrophobic and cut off from the rest of the world in its own bitter commitment to the past. Like those who long to unite the country, she longs to die "whole." Like her, Ireland has been abused and raped and has killed its own children. The child she has killed makes an appearance at the start and the end of the novel (like the ghost-child in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*), speaking of the deaths and the weeping and the blood of the country and the need for enemies to understand each other.

A feminist message intermittently makes itself heard through this analogy between the woman and the country.

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The cruelty of terrorism has its sources, it is suggested, in the way men treat women in this land of shame and murder. "If women ran your organization there would be no shooting," Josie tells McGreevy. (He is not convinced.) Stronger than any protest, though, is the sense of fatalism and helplessness, always present in O'Brien's treatment of women's lives, but here reaching outward from the domestic to the political. All are at the mercy of "something fateful that is to be," which will re-enact yet once more the fatefulness of the past. Like Josie, "soaked in the yeast" of her terrible memories, so Ireland is held to ransom by what are variously and predictably described as the chains, the grip and the dark threads of history.

To make this plain, Irish myth and legend, song and story, infiltrate the present-day story. The legends of Guaire and Diarmait, St. Caimin and St. Calum, Queen Maeve and Cuchulain, the story of the Colleen Bawn, the songs commemorating Michael Collins and Kevin Barry, fill the air. Everyone knows the stories and the songs. So the interesting question is raised of who can claim to be the more truly Irish, who is entitled to inherit these myths. Is it the terrorist from the North, spouting Gaelic to show that he is "a far better keeper of the country's soul and the country's heritage," or the young Catholic policemen who capture him, their heads also full of their country's history? "We're all Irish under the skin," says one of them. Who is the more Irish—politicians, men of violence, women? Mutual inheritance and mutual responsibility is argued—that no one, North or South, can escape this war; and that it is only the ordinary people (the argument, also, of *Lies of Silence*) who can bring it to an end.

But the novel's Celtic sentiment fatally softens and blurs its treatment of harsh realities. "The songs get to one," thinks one of the policemen, revealingly. Josie sings a song of the Fenian heroes and had an uncle who was killed by the Black and Tans. That was all different, we're repeatedly told. This is not 1916: "These guys are without conscience, without ideals and with only one proclamation, money and guns and murder, guns and money." McGreevy is one of "these guys." But, bound by an oath to the liberation of his country, amber-eyed, redheaded, famously cunning, he begins to look suspiciously like a reincarnation of Cuchulain. He's a somewhat shadowy, overromanticized character, with "a sort of radiance" emanating from him, "something stubborn and young and alone and tender about him." Josie, too, with her blue eyes and deep passions and cruel past, has a riskily folkloric air. Certain mysterious events at the book's tragic end suggest that she may herself become a legend, another Queen Maeve.

And Irish stereotypes are as ubiquitous as Irish myths. There's the lecherous eccentric neighbor, there's Brid the servant-girl who dreams of meeting her lover "in the soft unruly underlay of bog and bogland, everything seeping into her, his instrument in tooraloora fettle," there's the lovely young girl devoted to her revolutionary hero. Only in the brief sightings of the local townspeople, peevish and gossipy, something sharper and funnier comes through. More of this satire, and less keening, would have been welcome.

And more pace, too. In spite of the drama of the plot, the writing feels ponderous and slow, even flabby. There is not enough self-editing: "He stands above McGreevy, possessed of a cold and furious determination to smash through that lashing radius of hate and fanaticism to get to him"; "There are moments in life when a great softness is coupled with a great hardness." One particular mannerism, of turning verbs and adjectives into nouns—meant perhaps to sound vaguely Irish—makes everything feel passive and inert: "There was a jealousy in her"; "A fecklessness had taken root in him"; "There was something animal within the stillness of him"; "An urgency in her limbs, a precognition of what was to be"; "A great lunatic fork of longing rose up in her"; "A loneliness in it, the ache of a man hoping"; "In every jawline, a setness, a gravity betokening this appointment with morality"; "a terrible gravity to him." No one sets his or her jaw or feels feckless, everyone endures the condition of jaw-setness or fecklessness. It makes no difference if we are reading the child's voice, or the main narrative, or Josie's diary or the journal of Josie's uncle, an Irish Volunteer fighting against British rule: it all sounds the same, solemn, portentous and clichéd. It comes as no surprise to hear that the moans of an Irish cow in labor had "something primeval in them." After a while you begin to wait for someone to say that this was a beautiful and tragic land. And sure enough someone does: "What beautiful countryside, what serenity, what a beautiful tragic country to be born into," thinks the policeman. The policeman? In O'Brien's country, that's how policemen talk.

HERMIONE LEE is the author of *Willa Cather: Double Lives* (Vintage).

TRB *continued from page 6*

over a side issue? Women in general, and poor women in particular, will gain greatly from health care reform. Women are disproportionately among the currently uninsured. Clinton's package contains a fairly generous array of benefits. But everything is up for grabs in the coming negotiations. How much is worth giving up to save payments for abortion?

It's true, of course, that your right to abortion isn't worth much if you can't afford to exercise it. A less-than-satisfactory answer is that this is true of all our basic rights. Freedom of speech doesn't get you a megaphone, let alone a T.V. station. Freedom of religion doesn't buy you transportation to church. These are rights against government interference, not rights to a government-financed supply of the good in question.

In real life, how many women don't have abortions because they can't afford one? Some, to be sure. But a straightforward, first-trimester abortion in a clinic costs about $250. Thanks to the semi-repeal of the Hyde Amendment, Medicaid now pays for abortions in cases of rape or incest or when the woman's life is at risk. In other cases, even a poor woman will find a way to scrape together $250—especially when the alternative is the cost of bearing and raising an unwanted child. The bigger problem isn't money. It's that in many parts of the country abortion is unavailable at any cost. But forcing opponents to pay for abortions against their will won't solve that problem. (RU-486 might, and might make abortion cheaper still.)

The argument is made that leaving abortion out of the guaranteed benefits package under health care reform could deny abortion coverage to the millions who have it now, since that package will become the de facto standard for all private insurance as well. I can't prove that this won't happen. But if polls promoted by abortion rights groups are even close to accurate in showing that large majorities of Americans want abortion covered by insurance, it seems an unlikely development.

For believers in abortion rights, just like abortion opponents, the issue of abortion's role in health reform is more about the principle than about the money. It would be nice if abortion could just blend into the landscape—could become so uncontroversial that no special arrangements needed to be made for it. But we're still a long way from the point where abortion can be regarded as just one more "pregnancy-related service." I hope we get there. Meanwhile, even right-to-lifers deserve the right to choose.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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NEW YORK DIARIST

Fun with Dick and Jews

> There was considerable discussion of the terrible problem arising from the total Jewish domination of the media and agreement that this was something that would have to be dealt with.
>
> —*The Diaries of H. R. Haldeman*

FOR WEEKS I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO fill the emotional hole left by the death of Richard Nixon. It is not an easy task. Until recently I consoled myself by reviewing the videotape I made of his funeral. On the ninth or tenth replay, I began to think that Nixon's spirit had entered the body of California Governor Pete Wilson—that Nixon had assumed Wilson's corporeal reality, or virtual corporeal reality—because Wilson, in his eulogy, sounded so much like the great dead man himself. After a number of references to Nixon's astuteness in recognizing Wilson's own virtues, Wilson reached a peroration in praising Nixon for not demanding a recount in the 1960 presidential election "because he so loved his country that he refused to risk its being torn apart by the constitutional crisis that might ensue." Tears welled in my eyes. Was that not Nixon himself speaking from the casket? Was I, like an Elvis-watcher, observing the first Nixon sighting? No, I bitterly concluded. I knew Richard Nixon, and Pete Wilson is no Richard Nixon.

BUT THEN LAST WEEK CAME THE Haldeman diaries, and up leapt my heart again. It was as if Nixon himself had tossed them back to earth from his perch in the Otherworld as a last (typically) generous gesture. Nixon hated Jews, Haldeman had recorded. He especially hated Jews in the media. Not that this was a revelation; the Watergate tapes had said as much. But how wonderful to be reminded of his feelings after so many years, and especially now, when all the tearful expressions of love and admiration (one recalls Henry Kissinger's eulogy with particular poignancy) still dance on the sea air around Yorba Linda.

OF COURSE, MY FAVORITE PHRASE in the diary entry is: "... and agreement that this was something that would have to be dealt with." Yes, yes. I could hear Nixon's voice. It was as if we were all in the Oval Office with him, Haldeman and Erlichmann sitting on their haunches, nodding like pistons, Kissinger and Rabbi Korff *davening in the corner*. "This must be dealt with," says the president. But how? It is not a piece of coffee cake to get rid of all the Jews in the media. There are many of us, almost as many as the hordes of Jews who dominate Hollywood and the banking interests. According to the 1990 census (probably an underestimate), there are more than 3 billion Jews in the Washington and New York media alone, not counting the Hasids who drive the delivery trucks (except on Shabbat).

FOR ME, THE MERE thought of Nixon's worrying about this problem is a source of happiness, because it brings him back to life. But one must consider the problem itself. One might as well say it and take the consequences: it isn't merely that Jews dominate the media; we *are* the media. Everybody in the media is Jewish. Some are Sabras, who were born into the trade. Some, like *The Washington Post*'s William Raspberry or, occasionally, TNR's Fouad Ajami, are in disguise. Others have converted, and outsiders cannot always guess who. The examples of A. M. Richardson and William Seagrave, two columnists for *The New York Times*, offer a hint.

THE REASON THAT JEWS HAVE sought to monopolize the media (as if it were a secret) is to take over the world. We have done so in deliberate stages. Our interest in monopolizing world banks proved generally successful—with a slight glitch in Europe between the early 1930s and 1945. Our monopoly of Hollywood was swift and complete. It may seem odd that our design there was not to celebrate Jews in American culture but rather to reinforce the image of the dominant Protestant, yet that was merely a diversionary tactic. If one looks closely at films like *Life with Father* or *It's a Wonderful Life*, there was always a *tfillin* or a bit of matzo lying inconspicuously on a shelf or a table—our little landsman signals to one another that tomorrow was the world.

THE MEDIA, HOWEVER, HAS ALWAYS represented our most important and valuable conquest. John Peter Zenger (née Zengeler) came from Minsk, Ben Franklin from Pinsk. One by one, we built a nice little business. And eventually, by taking over all the newspapers, magazines and radio and T.V. stations in the country, we managed to create programs, and to orchestrate the news, in ways that only served our interests. And, naturally, Israel's. In fact, the wholehearted and unanimous U.S. support of Israel since its founding is entirely due to the Jewish domination of the media. In the realm of domestic politics, the fruit of our media labors glow like Jaffa oranges. To illustrate the point, one need do no more than count the number of Jewish presidents and vice presidents, Jewish senators, Jewish Supreme Court justices and Cabinet members in American history. Not to mention the Jewish heads of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Jewish ambassadors, the Jewish-dominated foreign service, direct from the shtetl to St. Paul's to Yale to power.

MEDIA DOMINATION has allowed us to control inimical expressions of opinion. True, mistakes slip through. And we get a little sore when we have to run Louis Farrakhan and his ideological brethren talking dirty, especially when we remember the days when we took a brief leave of absence from our ambitions of world dominance and joined civil rights marches, got whipped, shot and served time in Southern jails. But then, when we examine our true motives in that era, we are forced to acknowledge that the only reason we sought full equality for black Americans was so that they would buy our publications and watch our T.V. As Scotty (Schlomo) Reston (Rothenberg) said in his keynote at the National Jewish Conspiracy Convention in Darien, Connecticut, last December, "If it's good for the news, it's good for the Jews."

THIS IS A LONG-WINDED WAY OF saying that Nixon was right about this, as he was right about most things, and that the problem he bequeathed in the Haldeman diaries is real and has not gone away. How should one deal with this Jewish media problem? Sheer numbers suggest that camps would no longer be feasible. And extermination, while not out of the question, would be exceptionally difficult these days, since we Jews (fooled once) are not as gullible as we used to be, and, in any case, all Jewish reporters—that is, all reporters period—are armed.

ONLY NIXON COULD HAVE SOLVED this problem, and, alas, he is gone. Unless, of course, he is occupying a body other than Pete Wilson's. It has occurred to me that he might instead be housed within John Taylor, his long-devoted aide. When Taylor was asked to defend the Haldeman entry about dealing with the Jews, he was perfectly clear: "Politics and anti-Semitism are different things." Is that you, Dick?

ROGER ROSENBLATT

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Brown and Beyond

Fifty years ago, in the decade before the Supreme Court heard *Brown* vs. *Board of Education*, the American Federation of Teachers was a small union of about 50,000 members. Like other unions, it organized people where they were employed, and since schools were segregated, a number of AFT locals were, too, especially in the South. After World War II, AFT stopped accepting segregated locals into the union. Nevertheless, in cities like New Orleans and Atlanta, we had a large number of members in separate black and white locals.

When *Brown* was about to reach the Supreme Court, there were AFT members who agitated to have the union enter the suit on the side of the plaintiffs. But there were others who felt, just as strongly, that AFT should stay out of *Brown*. They said that we would alienate many union people and would lose members, and maybe even locals, in the South. It would also make further recruiting there very tough.

Despite these practical considerations, AFT decided to present a friend-of-the-court brief in support of the plaintiffs. We were the only education group to do so—no other teachers' union or association of principals or superintendents or other educators or school board association came forward to argue that school segregation was unconstitutional.

Remembering *Brown* should counter pessimism and give us the guts to try harder and push for more and continuing change.

Shortly after *Brown* was decided, AFT began to enforce the decision in its locals. This, too, was difficult and controversial. Critics said that if black and white locals were ordered to merge, most white locals would disaffiliate. And in the hostile climate following the decision, it was unclear that black locals could survive alone. A national referendum confirmed the policy, but all the segregated white locals did leave the union and, ultimately, many of the black locals folded. It was a long time before AFT began to come back in the South.

Those who worked for the *Brown* decision did not question its importance. In striking down segregation, the Supreme Court righted a terrible injustice and helped to make the U.S. more faithful to its democratic principles. But the response of many people to the 40th anniversary of *Brown* has been skeptical or indifferent. Many schools are still segregated—some of them after being integrated 20 years ago. And some African-Americans now question the validity of integration as an ideal. Was the fight worth it? Did *Brown* accomplish anything?

Forty years later, there is still a lot wrong with our society. We have not come as far toward eradicating the effects of slavery and Jim Crow laws as we hoped. In some respects, it looks as though we have regressed. Nevertheless, the decision removing the legal basis for segregated schools led to enormous changes in our entire society. It led to the Montgomery bus boycott and the lunchroom sit-ins, to the March on Washington and the Voting Rights Acts of 1955 and 1964. Before *Brown*, we would never have had an African-American Supreme Court justice or chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (who is now being looked at as a serious contender for a presidential nomination). We would not have had numerous elected officials who were African-American—mayors and members of Congress—some in constituencies that are not majority black.

Remembering *Brown*—and the odds against the people who worked for it—should counter pessimism and give us the guts to try harder and push for more and continuing change.

Some of the discouragement that African-Americans now feel about the pace of progress expresses itself in hostility toward white America and a desire to separate themselves from white society. *Brown* should also remind us that the African-Americans who achieved that victory were joined by white supporters, though small in number. And the great legislative victories that followed *Brown* depended on winning the support of the majority of Americans.

Since there is still a job to be done, white support is essential, and racism, anti-Semitism and talk about hatred toward all whites will only prevent African-Americans from getting the support they need and deserve in continuing their fight for justice. Some of the denial of progress and the insistence on hatred is a political tactic based on the idea that an extreme view will be more effective than a reasonable one. But white Americans did not participate in the changes introduced by *Brown* because they were afraid but because their consciences and their sense of justice were stirred. Tactics that depend on hatred and intimidation are bound to backfire.

Our democracy is capable of growing and becoming truer to its principles. But continuing progress depends on our joining together and negotiating our differences, rather than going our separate ways.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

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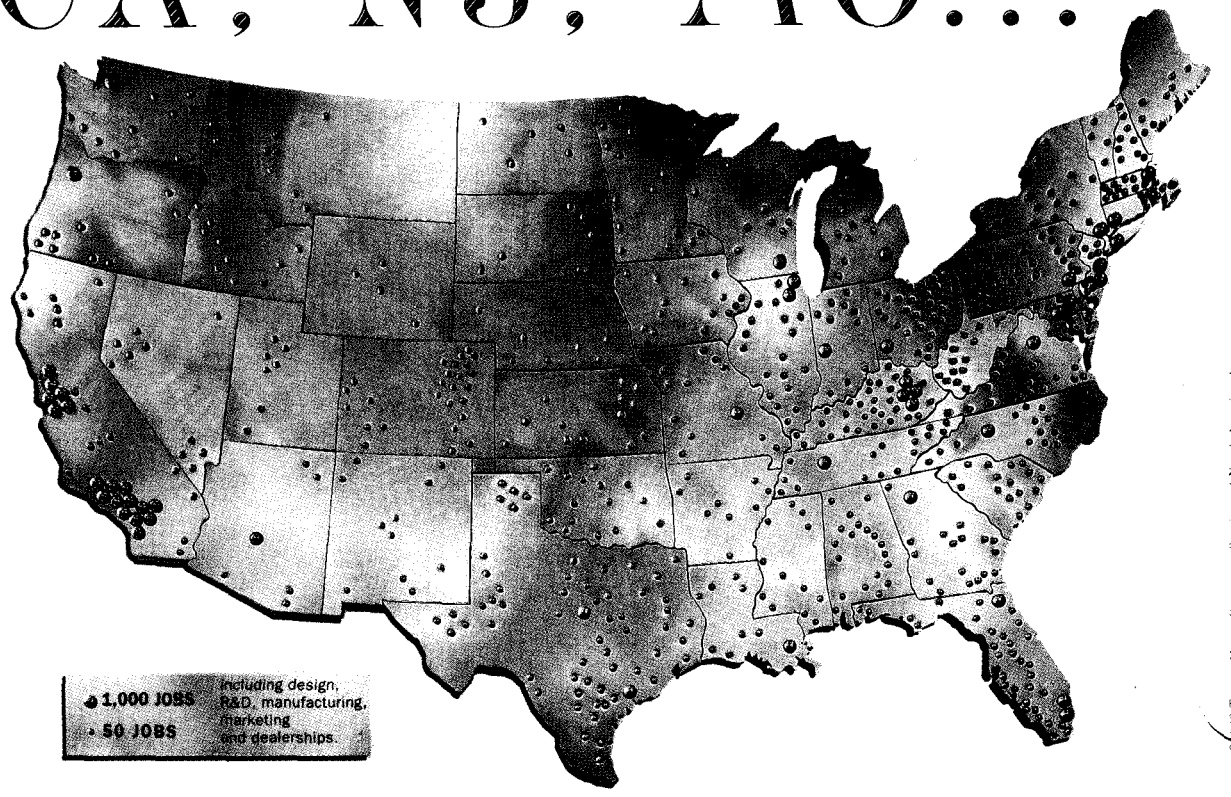

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